

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee,

I would first of all like to thank you for the opportunity though not able to be present, to still testify concerning house bill 680. As board chair of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative and President of the Ohio Baptist State Convention. Which encompasses thousands of registered voters who are overwhelmingly concerned about this new Bill HR 680 that is being proposed, that this bill will hinder and hamper the opportunity for all to participate in the voting process.

In the midst of a Corona pandemic crisis with the challenges that face people in Ohio who are doing everything in their power to stay well and secured until a cure for this pandemic moment is found. It is overwhelmingly difficult to imagine how anyone in the midst of these crises that are going on could possibly think of shortening the time to vote. The difficulties and frustrations that arose in the sudden change of time concerning the last primary brings to focus the necessity of making sure everyone has the opportunity to express their right to choose who they want to represent them.

Even in times like these when the state is opening up again there are still many who are senior citizens who are scared to death to get out in the public again due to the fact that they have already lost numerous friends and loved ones to the coronavirus and they are doing everything in their power to make sure it doesn't happen to them. There should be a sensitivity and an understanding of their needs, fears and apprehensions that should not stand in the way of them being able to cast their ballot through the mail. Nor should their opportunity to vote be shortened due to the fact that someone believes that they already have enough time to vote.

As the representative of one of the largest African-American bodies in the state of Ohio in the person of the Ohio Baptist state convention we find it appalling and disheartening that such a bill is even taken under consideration and it is for that reason that we strongly and vehemently oppose HB680. And as board chair of one of the most diverse and influential civic engagement organizations in the state, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, we find it necessary to stand together in opposition to HB680. We are saying no to this dangerous bill that will cause trauma, trepidation and the appearance of partisanship that does not provide equal opportunity for every citizen in the State of Ohio. PLEASE VOTE NO!!!

Pastor Michael H Harrison Sr.

Union Baptist Church, Pastor

Youngstown, Ohio

Ohio Baptist State Convention, President

Ohio Organizing Collaborative, Board Chair