

Submitted by: Tom Roberts President of Ohio State Conference NAACP
Date: June 3, 2020

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the Ohio House State and Local Committee, I come to you today representing over 50 Units of the NAACP in the State of Ohio. My name is Tom Roberts, President of the Ohio State Conference, former State Senator and a longtime resident of Dayton, Ohio.

The NAACP Ohio State Conference is strongly opposed of HB680. This past April many of our units in many counties experienced not just low voter turnout but much confusion and frustration with the vote by mail experience. With COVID-19, enabling many Communities of Color to vote in person, this pandemic put a challenge with the vote by mail process. Many of pockets of the African American/Hispanic Communities did not have the access internet to download the application for a request, to relying on the United States Postal Services to delivery the request timely nor receiving the ballot timely to vote.

In time of crisis, as Public Servants it is our goal to insure not just safety of the process but fairness of the process. This process needs to be sensitive to the diversity and many facets of Ohio voters. Everyone should be insured the right to vote in a timely fashion. Knowing the challenges many Communities have been forced to deal with in this pandemic, why would we promote a process that would make it even more difficult to participate in Democracy?

To shorten this process, the time of the process would be unfair to voters of all communities. Time is needed but shortening the time does not appear to be fair. To pass and implement this bill would only add more confusion to voters, more voter suppression, and creating even more distrust in the voter system. If we are the democracy of all people, it is our duty to insure a process that is fair, timely and safe to where all people can vote.

On behalf, of the NAACP Units across Ohio we urge the Committee and the Ohio House to reject HB680. Being the oldest Civil Rights Organization in our State is our duty to raise the voice of Voters. Reject this bill today and revisit the process through the lens of Democracy for all.