

TESTIMONY REGARDING SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

June 11, 2024

1:00PM

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 113

Witness:

**Bradley Willette
State Director, Ohio
Selective Service System**

Testimony:

Good afternoon, Chair Loychik, Vice Chair Demetriou, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 113.

My name is Brad Willette. I am the Ohio State Director for the United States Selective Service System.

State Directors are appointed on behalf of the President by the Director of Selective Service, upon the recommendation of the respective state Governors. Accordingly, I approach my job as an Ohioan. I want the best for our state and for registration-age men to remain in compliance with federal law.

Registration with the Selective Service System is a civic obligation and a rite of passage.

Throughout history, all men register with Selective Service System when they turn eighteen.

By registering with Selective Service System, Ohio men are showing the all-volunteer force that they aren't alone... That they stand with the men and women serving our nation in the United States Armed Forces.

This is why registration is so important to our country. That's why I'm concerned that registration rates for Ohio eighteen-year-olds dropped to 49.7% in 2023.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, 73% of Ohio eighteen-year-old men registered with Selective Service System.

To return registration rates to prior levels, we need help.

Senate Bill 113 creates a new incentive for Ohio men to register.

It also requires high schools to inform students of the registration requirement, inform students about ways to register, and designate a school official – such as a guidance counselor – through which students may register with Selective Service System.

High registration compliance rates in Ohio help ensure that any future military draft is fair and equitable. It also ensures that constituents remain eligible for federal, state, and local benefits linked to registration.

I appreciate your efforts to support the Selective Service System through this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.