

Proponent Testimony
SB 92 and HB 144
Ranae Lentz
April 25th, 2023

Chairman Peterson, Ranking Member Forhan and members of the House Government Oversight Committee:

My name is Ranae Lentz I am a 14 year board member of the Logan County Board of Elections, and a trustee of the Ohio Association of Election Officials.

HB144/SB92 would schedule a special August election for Ohioans to vote on the 60-percent threshold to amend our Constitution. This would protect the state's foundational document ahead of the November election.

Although August specials can be a costly way to run elections, They are sometimes necessary. That is the case this year.

According to Section 11 of the Ohio Constitution every citizen May freely speak, write and publish their sentiments on all subjects and this is what we are asking the General Assembly that every citizen has the right to vote and consider raising the threshold to pass amendments.

The political decisions of the people are too often influenced by advertising, usually financed from outside state groups which may not be in the best interests for the citizens of Ohio. We are a unique, common sense people that make up our own minds. Give us that opportunity.

The new threshold would strike an important balance between safeguarding Ohio from deep-pocketed, out-of-state interests wishing to enshrine their money-making schemes into Ohio's Constitution and protecting the fundamental rights of Ohio citizens to set the course of our state governance.

The Constitution should not be easily amended without a broad consensus of our citizens. —our state must require supermajority approval before amending our Ohio constitution.

“If a constitution can be amended instead by simple majorities, it becomes a document with unserious amendments (like one that actually passed here in Ohio a few years ago to change the location of a casino) becoming the norm and other rights becoming fundamentally insecure and subject to changing whims. That same time-tested principle applies here today with Ohio’s constitution—and its amendment process—as it always has.

“There is no reason that any sensible Ohioan should oppose a higher barrier for amending our state’s constitution—the only folks who want a lower threshold have current special interests in mind.

Can election officials successfully run an August election in 2023? In just the past four years, Ohio's election officials have implemented the nation's strongest and most comprehensive cybersecurity requirements. have shifted at a moment's notice to conduct an all-mail election under staggeringly difficult circumstances. We administered the single largest election in the state's history during a global pandemic. And we did so with a 99.98% accuracy rate. We administered the unprecedented second primary in 2022 while navigating nearly impossible deadlines.

Absolutely we can run an August election.

Please consider voting for an August election to save Ohio Constitution.