

Interested Party Testimony
Ohio Association of Election Officials
Senate Bill 71

Chairman Peterson, Vice-Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan and members of the House Government Oversight Committee. My name is Lavera Scott and in addition to being Director of the Lucas County Board of Elections, I am also Legislative Co-Chair of the Ohio Association of Election Officials (OAEO). I am here to offer interested party testimony on Senate Bill 71. While OAEO supports the goals of transparency and openness that SB 71 promotes, we would like to offer several suggestions which we believe makes the bill more administratively feasible and strengthen some of the provisions related to data security.

Suggestion #1: Clarify when postmarks must be used for voter registrations.

Traditionally, boards of elections use time stamps to record when voter registration forms are received. SB 71 would require the use of postmarks. Although OAEO supports this change and understands the necessity of using postmarks to determine eligibility of voter registrations that are received after registration closes 30 days prior to an election, requiring boards to use a postmark for forms received prior to the close of registration creates an unnecessary administrative burden. Furthermore, doing so does not advance the goals of the legislation to increase voter confidence or eliminate confusion. **Therefore, OAEO recommends that postmarks be used to determine the date of registration for registration forms received after the close of registration and time stamps be used for those received before the close of registration.**

Suggestion #2: Require boards to submit data at 4:00pm.

While OAEO supports standardizing when data is submitted to the Secretary of State, a 4:00pm deadline may inadvertently create inconsistencies in data reporting as boards continue to process and reconcile voter registration data after 4:00pm. **OAEO recommends that boards be required to submit data by the close of business each day. Doing so ensures that all data that is submitted to the SOS will reconcile with data recorded at the local level.**

Suggestion #3: Date of birth

SB 71 requires the Secretary of State to publish voters' full date of birth on their website. **We would encourage the legislation to mirror the practice of the locals and make only the birth year available on the Secretary of State website.** Typically, for identity theft reasons, boards of elections only share the birth year on our local websites. Although it has been suggested that this amendment runs contrary to the bill's goals of promising transparency would call your attention to lines 32-44 of the bill. These lines exempt a voters' social security number, driver's license number, telephone number and email address from public records. Clearly the bill, which increases transparency in many ways, also recognizes that certain pieces of information should be protected from the public. This suggested amendment does NOT exempt a voter's full date of birth from public records as the bill already does with these other pieces of information. Rather it only specifies that the public facing portion of the SOS website shows a voter's birth year rather than full DOB. The full DOB would remain a public record available to anyone upon request.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.