

88th House District
Seneca and Sandusky County



Committees
Civil Justice
Infrastructure and Rural
Development
Primary and Secondary Education

Columbus Office
Vern Riffe Center
77 S. High Street
12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111
(614) 466-1374
Rep88@ohiohouse.gov

Gary Click
State Representative

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the Government Oversight Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 210 today.

I'm grateful to partner with Representative Gross on House Bill 210 to streamline and secure Ohio's primary election process.

Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Florida are closed primary states like our legislation proposes. Our current system is partially open, similar to Illinois and Indiana. To our north, Michigan is completely open and allows voters to bounce back and forth.

The goal of HB 210 is to ensure equity, integrity, and honesty in Ohio's primaries. Partisan primaries serve a purpose in the election process that is different from that of the general election. That purpose should not be easily thwarted.

My wife and I are on opposite sides of Ohio's big football rivalry every year. I married a girl from that state up north. My son and grandchildren live there now. After the big game, my granddaughter face-timed me in her Maze and Blue T-shirt just to rub it in!

Perhaps you saw in the news that our quarterback, Kyle McCord, has decided to enter the transfer portal earlier this week after our loss on November 25th. Imagine if he had announced that on November 24th, or even worse, if he showed up to the game in Blue and Maze. That is what happens in primaries like ours.

Informed voters are familiar with each party's basic platform and approach to governance on the big issues. However, when one party has an uncontested candidate while the other is still sorting through the process, there is a temptation to raid the opponent's primary simply to spoil the process. This type of meddling is certainly bipartisan.

In 2008, Rush Limbaugh initiated what he called Operation Chaos to meddle with the Democratic Presidential Primaries. His scheme involved getting Republicans in states like ours to vote in Democratic primaries in order to elongate the battle between Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama, creating chaos in their party.

More frequently, however, members of one party will cross over to either to help select a more vulnerable opponent; or, if they feel their opponent is weak, to choose the least offensive of the opposite party. In either circumstance, the open primary defeats the actual purpose of a partisan primary. When one side is contested and the other is not, it is almost like having two general elections rather than a partisan primary and a general election. This is self-defeating.

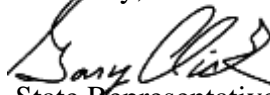
Election integrity is essential in all elections. The manipulation of primary results needs to be addressed to assure bipartisan fairness in the election process. One year, the open process may be

to the advantage of one party and the next year it may favor the other. However, closed primaries ensure fairness for all.

While a thirty-day window allows voters to change teams the day before the election, a December 31st deadline continues to grant flexibility for the voter while increasing the confidence of all voters in the integrity of our election process.

Chairman Peterson and members of the Government Oversight Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on this important bill. We would be happy to take any questions at this time.

Sincerely,



State Representative Gary Click
Ohio House District 88



State Representative Gary Click