

Proponent Testimony for House Bill 472
House Homeland Security Committee
May 15, 2024

Greg Fraley

Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas:

I am writing to let you know I fully support House Bill 472, The Ohio Votes Count Act. Thank you to Representative Willis and Representative Peterson for sponsoring this important bill. I respectfully request that everyone on the Homeland Security committee also back this bill to make elections more secure and reliable for all citizen Ohioans.

I became very concerned when I learned that 1,800 deceased persons were registered to vote in the state of Ohio in November of 2022. But when I realized that 800 of those who had passed away had actually voted, I became notably alarmed. I am left in disbelief – HOW could this happen? Then, I did a little research and found an article from Politico titled “Report: 1.8M Dead Registered to Vote” by Mackenzie Weinger on February 14, 2012 and here is an excerpt from that article from over 20 years ago: “The United States’ voter registration system is in chaos – about 24 million registrations are no longer valid and nearly 2 million dead people are still on voter rolls, according to a new report Tuesday. There also are more than 1.8 million deceased people who still have active registration on voter rolls, Pew found. And, Becker said, the outdated, inefficient systems currently in place are “not designed to keep up with deaths as they occur.” Meanwhile, Pew said it is working with several states this cycle to upgrade their voter registration system. The new approach includes states creating ways for voters to submit information online and having election offices compare registration lists with other data sources such as motor vehicle records.”

So, 21 years have passed since that article was published and my home state of Ohio has not dealt with this glaring and obvious problem. This is absolutely embarrassing. But now, we have a bill that will finally target this issue and many others that affect honest, accurate elections for our state. HB472 – The Ohio Votes Count Act, directly deals with deceased voters by requiring the Boards of Elections in Ohio to review a weekly report from the Secretary of State that shows electors who have died and act on it immediately by canceling those voter records on the spot.

Thank you to all of you on the committee for taking my testimony into consideration. Please get this bill passed. Ohio voters deserve the best election system and we are currently falling short – very short.