

Proponent Testimony for HB 472
House Homeland Security Committee
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Richland County Co-Leader of Ohio Election Integrity Network

Dear Chairman Gahnbari, Vice-Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Homeland Security Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about my viewpoint pertaining to HB 472, also known as the Ohio Votes Count Act. I have been a poll worker since 2008, and have been involved with the Ohio Election Integrity Network for two years. I have become more informed about our elections through research and by getting to know my county Board of Elections office. I have been impressed with the diligent work that goes into each election. Providing them with more timely and secure ways to ensure the integrity of those elections is a good move.

I am particularly in favor of:

- improving the process for each county's Board of Elections office to maintain and ensure that only those who are currently Ohio citizens with proper ID are included on the voter rolls,
- bringing the standards for certifying the integrity of each election machine statewide up to current military standards, including the use of "blockchain ledger" technology to allow an unbiased audit of machines and voting records,
- and requiring that absentee and mailed in ballots include a verifiable copy of that voter's ID.

The current rules governing the enrollment, maintenance, and accuracy of Ohio voter rolls is cumbersome, expensive, and inefficient, relying on the postal service as well as a response from the persons whose voting registration is in question. In my experience with the Board of Election Office, their goal for county voter registration is to be fair, accurate, and timely, protecting each legitimate voter and removing those who are not.

The Ohio Votes Count Act will allow then to use a different process that is more effective, starting with evaluating each voter application before the new voter is added to the rolls. Each county BOE will be empowered with access to the resources, data and tools they need to ensure accurate and current voter registration, which will also reduce the need for the cumbersome post card mailing process which can allow ineligible voters to remain on rolls for four years or more. Evaluating ineligible and incomplete applications before they are entered into the voter rolls just makes sense.

Concerning the selection of Ohio's voting and e-pollbook machines (and other voting systems used), the Ohio Board of Voting Machine Examiners are currently not required to be from different political parties, without criminal records nor be citizens of Ohio. Additionally, the requirements governing the process of certification and auditing are not up to national military security standards. Since voting is one of our citizens' most sacred rights and selection of their representatives directly impacts the laws and priorities of this state and nation, it makes sense to ensure that the security of the machines counting those votes is protected as much as possible. Requiring blockchain ledger technology will allow for more accurate audits as well. Mail-in ballots lack the same security and chain of custody protections that in-person voting provides, and this also makes the identity requirements different for mail-in versus in-person voters. In an effort to help verify the identity of each voter sending in or dropping off a ballot, requiring a copy of the voter's eligible ID is a smart measure.

These are just some of the reasons I am in favor of HB472. Thank you for the opportunity to share my viewpoints. I hope that as the members of this committee review this important bill, they will approve it and send it to the floor for a vote as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Race