

Testimony on House Bill 472
to Ohio House Homeland Security Committee
by James Rigano, Springboro, OH

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Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, and Members of the Homeland Security Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 472, The Ohio Votes Count Act.

My name is Jim Rigano. I am an engineer and data analyst by training and profession. Since the Summer of 2021 I have been examining Ohio's voter rolls in detail, downloading and evaluating the statewide and county voter files that are available from the Secretary of State's website and from Ohio counties. I discovered problems and errors in Ohio's voter rolls that demand correction. Many of these errors are preventable with modern databases.

Data analysts refer to a concept called "data validation." Data validation is the process of verifying that data is correct and that it is properly entered into a database. Our voter registration databases need data validation. Ideally, this is done as the data is entered, but the data can also be screened for problems that need correction after it is entered. This bill provides a mechanism for both options.

Good data validation would prevent these types of errors that currently exist in our voter rolls.

- 54,035 individuals registered before the law allows, or more likely, either their birth date or registration date is incorrect in the registration databases.
- 173, 049 persons were registered on a holiday when the post office and board of elections is closed, or their registration date is wrong.
- 531 persons are 105 or more years old, including Brittany Rose Cochran who is allegedly 138 years old.
- 169 persons were registered **before** they were born, or their birth date or reg date is wrong.
- 7,202 persons birth dates have changed. These may be corrections, but then the original date of birth was wrong.
- 20,208 likely duplicate registration records exist.
- 350 persons registered at the post office or a commercial mailbox store like The UPS Store
- Forty-five persons have a one-letter last name like Hadder William D, or the parts of their name were entered in the wrong data fields.
- 4,632 occurrences of punctuation marks SOS directives say should never be used.
- Numbers in names, for example Victor 517 Stefanides and Larry GreyPon3 Stanley.

- 2,056 current registrants' names match ODH death records.
- 779,828 inactive registrants that have not voted in 6 years; 167,138 are listed with 'Active' status.
- The statewide database is supposed to have the same data as county databases, but it doesn't.

County	Missing records	Name mismatch	Address mismatch	Registration date mismatch	2020 Voting history mismatch	2022 Voting history mismatch
Cuyahoga	4745	295	820	1,601	19,604	3,780
Franklin	13	9	7,679		32,099	7,496
Hamilton	154	7,226	357	448,535	15,719	3,664
Butler	38	7	7	No county data	No county data	No county data
Montgomery	19	2	2	0	12,353	2,341
Warren	0	0	0	0	11,304	2,155
Lucas	5	2	1	0	5,267	

Mr. Chairman, Ohioans are worried that the election fiascos that occurred in other states could come to Ohio. This concern is driving citizens to bring these issues to their county boards for correction. Some have invested \$1000s of their own money to deploy a website so that more citizens can be engaged with their BOE.

Our county boards of elections do an excellent job of running elections, but they are not computer experts or database administrators. Nor should they be. They need help.

Ohio has an abundance of data about its citizens and its non-citizens. The State of Ohio knows my full name, my address, my birth date, my weight, even my eye color. HB 472 establishes a data validation framework where the Secretary of State prepares reference lists of **valid** names, addresses, and other data so that new registration records can be compared with these lists. Similarly, the bill requires the SOS to maintain lists of deceased persons, and other individuals and addresses that should **NOT** be in the voter rolls. These lists will provide information that voter registration vendors can incorporate into their software so that data entry can be automated. Until that happens the lists are a useful tool for boards to verify voter information.

Also, the Secretary will regularly prepare reports that identify potential problems such as the ones I mentioned. The boards of elections will then investigate and remediate any issues.

The current audit of the statewide voter registration database promulgated in OAC 111:3-4-5 is missing scores of problems that I have already mentioned. This bill corrects this by requiring the Auditor of State to conduct an annual audit of the statewide voter registration database and three counties selected at random. The Auditor will look for the common problems that citizens are finding today and assure that the voter rolls comply with SOS directives and state law.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot, must not, leave the voter rolls in their current condition. It will take some effort to ensure the issues are resolved and provide continuing oversight.

Chairman Ghanbari, I am grateful for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee and for Representative Peterson's and Representative Willis's sponsorship. We can all agree that maintaining clean voter rolls is critical for fair and accurate elections, and fair and accurate elections are Job #1 for good government. The Ohio Votes Count Act is an essential step forward to accurate voter rolls.

Thank you, and I am happy to address any questions you or the Committee may have.

Jim Rigano