

VOTE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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*Proponent Testimony of Anthony Perlatti
Director, Cuyahoga County Board of Elections
Ohio Senate General Government Committee
April 24, 2024*

Chairman Rulli, Vice-Chair Schuring, Ranking Member DeMora and Members of the Senate General Government Committee:

My name is Anthony Perlatti and I am the Director of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. I am pleased to submit proponent testimony for SB 173.

In Ohio, it is easy for voters to cast a ballot, whether it be at the polls on Election Day or through the absentee voting processes. What many voters do not realize is there is an extremely dedicated, hardworking, selfless group of election officials completing the high volume of complex and extensive duties needed to make the voting public's experience seamless.

Election Officials do not go into the office every day expecting public praise, or to be in the media's attention. They are humble public servants. Election Officials go into the office every day because they are passionate about democracy, they are passionate about serving their community, have pride in their work product and a positive moral compass to do what's best for their state, their county, and their local communities. They are the unsung heroes of our democratic process. Election Officials do expect to go into the workplace, the grocery store, and their child's school events, without being unfairly harassed and threatened by radicalized individuals who believe election officials are corrupt public servants and human beings.

At the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, we expect and deal with unpleasant and at times hostile phone calls and in person interactions during the workday. But when the workday is over, our election officials rightfully and deservedly expect the opportunity to live their lives without interference from extremist actors. The country's political landscape is becoming more polarized and there is a greater chance for the negative effects of radical behavior to be targeted towards Ohio's election officials as we approach the November 5th election cycle.

Cuyahoga County, along with their colleagues from the other 87 counties, pride ourselves on conducting our election operations in a transparent environment to promote integrity in Ohio election administration. But when the workday is over, the husbands, wives, and parents who make up Ohio's election workforce need to be able to leave the transparent work world to enjoy the privacy afforded to other citizens who work in this country's critical infrastructure environment.

I want to express my gratitude to Senators DeMora and Gavarone as the primary sponsors of Senate Bill 173, and their proactive approach to addressing the potentially volatile and

problematic environment our dedicated and hardworking Ohio election administrators continue to be subjected to.

As the Director of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, I offer my support and urge the passage of Senate Bill 173. Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee might have.