

April 22, 2024

Carl Henderson

5554 Aisenbrey Road

Huber Heights, OH 45424

Dear Charman Rulli, Ranking Member DeMora of the General Government Committee,

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill (SB) 137. My name is Carl Henderson, and I am a resident of the City of Huber Heights. I am a program manager at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and I am writing to oppose the passage of SB 137.

As we embark on an election cycle in which we will elect the President, Congressional leaders, state, and local officials; more Americans are growing disgruntled with the current political system. Candidates with the most campaign funds and influence win elections, instead of those that reflect the voices and values of the electorate as a whole. When our Founding Fathers fought for independence and our freedoms, they intended to create a system of governance by consensus. They understood that elections are the “laboratories of democracy”, in which the way elections are ran must evolve in order to meet the needs of constituents in the community, state, and country overall.

Ranked choice voting (RCV) takes the power away from politicians and political action committees (PACs) and gives it back to the citizens to vote for candidates that best demonstrates the ability to tackle issues in the community while reflecting the value system of the electorate. The concept of RCV is not a new concept in the state of Ohio. Five cities in the state: Cincinnati, Ashtabula, Toledo, Hamilton, and Cincinnati; used RCV to repeal efforts led by corrupt politicians and party bosses. The sponsor of SB 137 has even acknowledged that the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in 1923 that Ohio municipalities and charter counties have a right to use RCV, which in turn emphasizes the Home Rule Authority granted by the Ohio Constitution. SB 137 if passed would punish municipalities for simply exercising their right to use RCV, which goes against historical precedent set by the Ohio Supreme Court and Ohio Constitution.

In short, this senate bill does not protect the Ohio voter and in turn would begin the deterioration of our democracy as we know it. I ask that you vote against SB 137 and keep the values and principles of our Founding Fathers intact to ensure that present and future generations can live in a society that values their opinion(s) and voice as Ohioans and Americans.

Sincerely,

Carl Henderson