

**Opponent Testimony for SB 137**  
**Ohio Senate General Government Committee**  
**Andrea Van Sickle**  
**April 22, 2024**

Chairman Rulli, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the General Government Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Andi Van Sickle. I am a resident of Dayton and an elected Caucus Delegate for Congressional District 10 covering Montgomery, Greene, and Clark county. I have spent the last 10 plus years volunteering and working across the State of Ohio with both partisan and nonpartisan nonprofit organizations. I would like to share that I am not being paid to speak today, in that I strongly oppose SB 137.

I want to start off saying that I appreciate every one of you sitting here today. Politics... What you are doing, and your position, is not easy. No matter what you choose to do, there will always be dissatisfied people. And sometimes that can even become scary.

But what's scary, or rather sad for a lot of people in the country, is how divided and partisan things have become. Usually, bipartisan bills are applauded; This often doesn't happen at any level of government with supermajorities. However this bipartisan bill has the power to take away what is needed most today. What we need most is to find commonality across party lines, not just here in committees by those in power, but at the kitchen table of homes, and neighbors across streets- and that is exactly what Ranked Choice Voting does. It brings people, who may have different views, together.

How you may ask? When vote-splitting is eliminated and candidates require a majority win, we get more variety of candidates with the freedom to run without the backlash of being a "spoiler". On a ranked ballot, it's in the candidates best interest to campaign across party lines, seeking out commonalities with opposing parties in effort to secure second choice votes. Candidates connecting with constituents also across party lines, which doesn't seem to happen often in campaigning today.

This is the positivity so desperately needed in our current political environments. Leading positivity by example- it starts with how we run our political elections and campaigns.

Having more candidates on a primary ballot shouldn't punish voters with a minority win. Right now, more candidates means more vote splitting, and the possibility of a primary win with only 30 something percent of the vote. This feels demoralizing to the 60 something percent, the majority voters, that did not vote for the primary winner. The cheaper, faster, and more efficient way to know who the majority really wants, is through instant runoffs or ranked choice voting.

I understand that the mere idea of bringing back more competitive primaries would be distasteful for our representatives currently in power. But what is your duty as a representative? To uphold

the history of Ohio and the Constitutional rights of municipalities as ranked choice voting is gaining bipartisan traction? Or is it your duty to find ways to go around the current law, penalizing municipalities by pulling state funding? What message does that send your constituents? Some which don't even get candidates on their primary election ballot.

Simply put, this bill violates Ohio's Home Rule\*. It's not the precedent that was set historically here in Ohio, given our rich history of ranked choice voting in Cleveland, Ashtabula, Toledo, Hamilton, and Cincinnati.

This is the UNITED States of America. Let's unite Ohio! I'm not asking you to love ranked choice voting. I ask that you don't take away the will and hope of the people.

Please consider my testimony and vote NO on this bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Andrea Van Sickle

\*Ohio Constitution. Article XVIII Municipal Corporations, Section 7 | Home rule; municipal charter  
Effective:1912

"Any municipality may frame and adopt or amend a charter for its government and may, subject to the provisions of section 3 of this article, exercise thereunder all powers of local self-government."

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-constitution/section-18.7>

Ohio Constitution. Article XVIII Municipal Corporations, Section 3 | Municipal powers of local self-government  
Effective:2022

"Subject to the requirements of Section 1 of Article V of this constitution, municipalities shall have authority to exercise all powers of local self-government and to adopt and enforce within their limits such local police, sanitary and other similar regulations, as are not in conflict with general laws."

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-constitution/section-18.3>

Ohio Constitution. Article V Elective Franchise, Section 1 | Who may vote  
Effective:2022

"Only a citizen of the United States, of the age of eighteen years, who has been a resident of the state, county, township, or ward, such time as may be provided by law, and has been registered to vote for thirty days, has the qualifications of an elector, and is entitled to vote at all elections. No person who lacks those qualifications shall be permitted to vote at any state or local election held in this state. Any elector who fails to vote in at least one election during any period of four consecutive years shall cease to be an elector unless the elector again registers to vote."

<https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-constitution/section-5.1>