

## TESTIMONY REGARDING SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

MAY 30, 2023

2:30PM

### SENATE VETERANS AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

#### Witness:

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**Selective Service System | National Headquarters**

#### Testimony:

Good afternoon, Chair Hoagland, Ranking Member Craig, Vice Chair Wilson, and Senators Johnson and Wilkin.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 113.

My name is Jacob Daniels. I serve as Deputy General Counsel for Legislative Affairs at the United States Selective Service System.

The Selective Service System is an independent federal agency that has been a distinguished part of our nation's history for over a century, spanning throughout eras of conflict and peacetime. The agency represents an additional tier of support to our all-volunteer military in the event of a national emergency.

The Military Selective Service Act requires the agency to register men and maintain a system that, when authorized by the President and Congress, rapidly provides personnel in a fair and equitable manner while managing an alternative-service program for conscientious objectors.

Men must register within thirty days of their eighteenth birthday. They can register at our website, [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov), at any United States Post Office, and in some states – like in Ohio – men are registered when they apply for a driver's license, learner's permit, identification card, or renewal.

The Selective Service System is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, and our Data Management Center and Regional Headquarters are in North Chicago, Illinois; Marietta, Georgia; and Denver, Colorado.

There are fifty-six state directors, including Mr. Bradley Willette, who represent both the Governor and Director of Selective Service in each state, territory, Washington, DC, and New York City.

In every county and parish in America, Washington, DC, and Territories, there are volunteers who serve as local board members.

In the event of a military draft, these 10,000+ volunteers will be activated to hear requests for reclassification by inductees, including requests to be reclassified as a conscientious objector.

Decisions rendered by these local boards can be appealed to the respective district appeal board, and in some cases, can be appealed to the President via the National Appeal Board.

Senate Bill 113 requires registration with Selective Service System – if required to register under federal law – to be eligible to work in Ohio state or local government.

This bill aligns with federal law which requires registration to be eligible for employment in the Executive Branch. This includes employment with any federal agency, the United States Postal Service, the Census Bureau, AmeriCorps, and Peace Corps.

Eighteen states have laws like Senate Bill 113.

Nineteen states, including Ohio, have laws on the books that require registration to qualify for in-state tuition, state-based student aid, scholarships, loans, or grants.

Registration is required to be eligible for job training administered by the states under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Immigrants who fail to register face up to a five-year delay in obtaining citizenship and bi-partisan DREAMER legislation in Congress conditions eligibility on registration with Selective Service System.

And finally, federal law requires that a man present himself for registration within thirty days of his eighteenth birthday.

Statutes that condition benefits on registration with Selective Service System are designed to incentivize registration.

In 2022, however, only 51% of eighteen year-old men in Ohio registered with Selective Service System.

We are seeing a drop in registration rates across the board because of many factors:

- Less young people are getting driver's licenses;
- The *FAFSA Simplification Act* simplified the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), but with the consequence that men are no longer registered via the FAFSA; and
- COVID-19 has had impacts

Thus, we are seeing a drop in registration rates.

The agency aggressively advertises on digital platforms to notify young men of their legal and civic obligation to register; we attend conferences to inform influencers, such as coaches, teachers, and mentors about the registration requirement; but where registration efforts are best assisted is via registration incentives, such as conditioning employment on registration with Selective Service System.

In the event of a military draft, the system of selection must be fair and just. But a system like here in Ohio, where only 51% of 18-year-old men register means that 49% of Ohio men didn't register... the burden is carried by the 51%.

Efforts to incentivize registration is the remedy.

Thank you for your support of the Selective Service System's mission.