

60th House District:
Part of Delaware County

Columbus Office:
Vern Riffe Center 77 S. High
Street 11th Floor Columbus, Ohio

Contact:
(614) 644-6711
Rep60@ohiohouse.gov



Brian Lorenz
State Representative

Committees:

**Vice Chair: Development
Insurance
Local Government
Transportation**

Chair Ray, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the committee—thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 299.

This bill addresses a simple but important principle: Ohio's laws should be shaped by Ohioans. House Bill 299 ensures that individuals who collect signatures for statewide ballot initiatives or referenda are legal residents of the state of Ohio.

We've seen a growing trend in recent years—well-funded, out-of-state interests hiring paid workers, often from outside Ohio, to gather signatures for ballot proposals that would change our state constitution or statutes. These are people with no ties to our communities, no understanding of our values, and no long-term investment in the consequences of the policies they're helping to advance.

Ballot initiatives are an important part of our democratic process. They give the people a voice when they believe elected leaders are out of step. But that process must be rooted in the people who actually live here, work here, raise families here, and vote here. When the signature collection process becomes outsourced to temporary workers bused in from across the country, it raises serious concerns about integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Requiring signature collectors to be Ohio residents is not about limiting free speech—it's about preserving the integrity of our elections and making sure those who are shaping our laws have skin in the game.

Ohioans have every right to debate, to organize, and to advocate for change—but that conversation should be driven by people who call this state home.

I urge my colleagues to support House Bill 299 and stand up for Ohioans' voices in our democratic process. Thank you for your time and attention, and I'm happy to answer any questions from the committee.