

Chair Ray, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House General Government Committee:

Thank you for giving Ohioans the opportunity to provide written testimony on SB 293. The issue of voter rights is a high priority for me and a focus of my volunteer activities. I am strongly opposed to SB 293.

By eliminating the four-day return window for mailed ballots received after Election Day, SB 293 would result in the disenfranchisement of Ohio voters whose valid absentee ballots were mailed by the deadline but were thrown out and not counted because of mail delays. Thousands of Ohioans would likely be affected by this anti-voter legislation. Of the over 2.6 million Ohioans who voted before Election Day in November 2024, 803,253 (31%) voters used the USPS to return their ballots. Over 9,500 of those ballots were received during the four-day, post-election window. Although Ohioans in general are experiencing irregular and delayed mail service, registered voters who particularly rely on voting by mail and would be most affected by passage of SB 293 are voters in rural Ohio, the elderly, those who have handicaps, and those who do not have reliable access to transportation. Passage of SB 293 would compound the voting access restrictions that have been recently enacted including reduction in the number of official ballot drop boxes, more restrictive voter ID requirements, and reduction of the number of early voting days.

Voter fraud is virtually nonexistent in Ohio and throughout the US. SB 293 and Executive Order 14248 (aka "Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections") are solutions in search of a problem.

I ask you to consider this testimony, to respect the voting rights of Ohioans, and to vote NO on this harmful, anti-voter bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. My witness information form is attached.

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