

March 23, 2025

Scott Ellis

6620 Wynwright Drive

Dublin, OH 43016

Chairman Gavarone, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Ohio Senate Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 63. My name is Scott Ellis, and I am a working citizen of the State of Ohio.

This bill is a clear violation of home rule and an overreach of state government power into local affairs. Ohio's charter cities have a constitutional right to decide for themselves whether RCV or other election methods are more appropriate for their communities. SB 63 threatens the Home Rule Authority granted by the Ohio Constitution, which allows local governments to make decisions based on their specific needs rather than a one-size-fits-all approach dictated by the state. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled in 1923 that Ohio municipalities have the right to use RCV. Blocking RCV for municipal elections undermines the principle of local self-government, which is fundamental to Ohio's democratic tradition.

Also, contrary to claims that RCV is confusing, voters have consistently found it easy to understand and use. In states like Alaska and Utah, over 80% of voters reported that RCV was "simple" and "easy" after using it. Even in Virginia, where Republicans used RCV for their 2022 primaries, a majority of participants expressed a preference for this voting method. These experiences demonstrate that voters across the political spectrum can quickly adapt to and appreciate the benefits of RCV.

SB 63 not only infringes on local autonomy but also disregards the preferences and capabilities of Ohio voters. It also deprives Ohio voters of a voting system that has proven to be simple, effective, and preferred by those who have used it. Rather than limiting their options, let's trust in the wisdom of our local communities and preserve their right to choose the voting system that best serves their needs. I urge the committee to reject SB 63 and uphold the principles of home rule and voter empowerment.

Thank you for your consideration.