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Chairperson Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, members of the General Government Committee, and Ohioans here in Columbus and at home across the State, thank you for allowing me to speak on Senate Bill 63.

I strongly oppose SB 63 and am deeply disappointed that we must fight just to have our voices heard. We are not here in Columbus to discuss and debate whether Ranked Choice Voting would be good for our cities or towns in our State, we are here fighting to even be allowed to have the conversation. The bipartisan sponsors of this bill are spending time and resources to ban and restrict our cities and towns from being able to decide how they deal with elections in their own communities. This is government overreach at an extremely local level.

Beyond this, there is this continued assertion that Ranked Choice Voting is too confusing for Ohioans, with Senator DeMora even saying in his testimony “why should we expect the average Bob and Betty Buckeye to be able to [rank 52 candidates in order of preference].” This is blatantly misleading rhetoric. Not only is it ludicrous to assert that Bob and Betty Buckeye would have to rank 52 candidates, but it completely ignores the conversations that Bob and Betty Buckeye have at the dinner table every day. I ask Ohioans right now, how many times have you said, or heard, “if it’s not this person, then I want it to be this person. And if it’s not them, then I want it to be this person.” SB 63 suggests that either you are incapable of making such decisions, or that you having that power threatens the status quo.

I would love to talk and discuss the intricacies of Ranked Choice Voting, but I remind you that that is not what SB 63 is about. SB 63 is taking that conversation away from us, the People of Ohio. Just as this bill has bipartisan sponsor support, this bill should have nonpartisan opposition. This bill is about who has the power to run our own communities – the People in our neighborhoods or politicians in Columbus that they’ve never heard of. I urge any and every Ohioan that believes that they know best in their communities to fight this bill and keep the power in the hands of the People.

Thank you for taking the time to care about the future of the People of our State.