



May 27, 2025

Chairwoman Roegner, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the General Government Committee:

My name is Greer Aeschbury, and I am the Ohio Senior Campaign Manager for All Voting is Local Action, an organization advocating for policies and legislative priorities that protect and expand voter access. AVL Action Ohio is also a member of the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition, a coalition of pro-voter organizations. As you will hear from my colleagues across the state, Senate Bill 153 is a dangerous and unnecessary bill. Many have already stated this important fact, but it bears repeating: Ohio's elections are already secure and accurate. SB 153 is a significant rewrite of our laws with far-reaching consequences and a reckless solution in search of a problem.

The sponsors of SB 153 claim that this is a technical fix to voter registration – but this is inaccurate. This bill has massive implications, not only for voter registration but also for petition signature collection and administrative burdens on our Boards of Election, also known as BOEs.

For example, SB 153 changes the provisional balloting process in ways that will result in not only more provisional ballot rejections, but also voter registration cancellations. This bill requires that any provisional ballots that are rejected result in the cancellation of the voter's registration. Please understand that many times, a provisional ballot could be rejected for technical errors, such as inputting the wrong driver's license number or transposing your birth date (all actual examples we have observed). All Voting is Local produced a [report](#) last year on the 34,000 provisional ballot rejections of the November 2024 election. The second most popular reason for rejection was a lack of proper ID. This means voters attempted to vote, but because of Ohio's strict photo ID rules, they either didn't have the proper ID or simply forgot to bring it in. Under SB 153, all 7,053 of the voters who didn't have the proper ID would not only have had their provisional ballots tossed, but their entire voter registration cancelled. So the next time they showed up to vote, with proper ID in hand, they would be rejected again. This is not "protecting our elections." This is extreme voter suppression that forces voters into a vicious cycle that will be hard to overcome.

And because of the bill's onerous and strict new requirements, we can expect even more people to be voting with provisional ballots. This could be because you recently got married, changed your last name, but didn't update your driver's license yet. It could be that you moved and updated your driver's license, but not your voter registration. Any discrepancy between the BMV records and your voter registration will result in a provisional ballot and put you at risk of not

only your vote being tossed, but also your registration being cancelled outright. Is this fair? Absolutely not.

The Secretary of State recently directed BOEs to work on discrepancies between BMV data and voter registration records. On April 2, SOS LaRose released [Directive 2025-25](#), which institutes a new process for verifying voter records and correcting mismatches. SOS LaRose stated in the directive: “These data entry discrepancies are **not** commonly indicative of fraud or irregularities, but they must be resolved to comply with our shared statutory responsibility to **maintain the accuracy of the statewide voter registration database.**”¹

Directive 2025-25 from Sec. LaRose should tell us two things: 1. BMV data does not always perfectly match voter registration data and is NOT indicative of fraud, and 2. The BOEs are still in the process of reviewing and correcting that data.

Furthermore, BOEs are already in the midst of implementing another new process. On April 7 of this year, yet another election law was implemented, HB 74. This law changed how the BMV handled voter registration by creating electronic voter registration files instead of having to mail paper forms to each BOE. This is a positive step. However, SB 153 includes massive changes to how voter registrations are processed and verified. The state has just started new electronic data sharing, and to pile yet more changes on our election officials and BOEs is irresponsible at best. They have been through enough these last several years.

Instead of adding yet more changes to the elections process, legislators should allow the BOEs to implement, evaluate, and provide feedback on these current changes. The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition has volunteers who attend BOE meetings monthly to observe what their local board is working on and become informed about the election system. I urge any legislator who supports significant overhauls of our voting system, like SB 153, to likewise spend time with your local BOEs – not with just one meeting, but through the regular observation of the processes they implement over a year and fully understand how our election system works.

I urge the committee to reject this bill and commit to understanding this complex and incredibly important process before considering a 200-plus page bill with devastating and far-reaching implications. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Greer Aeschbury

¹ Emphasis added