

Hearing Testimony:

May 23, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gaverone, Ranking Member Blackshear and members of the Senate General Government Committee:

My name is Angelique Gates, and I am writing on behalf of Cleveland VOTES. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am writing to express my firm opposition to SB 153. This erosive bill is unnecessary and deeply harmful to the communities we work passionately to serve, such as those with already restricted resources to enact their civic duty.

My organization believes this troubling bill will restrict public participation in governance, while working to minimize democratic access. In times where we need to uplift Ohioans, this bill is attacking the citizen initiative process. The long term effects of this legislation will impact marginalized communities, some in irreparable ways.

The legislature should not rush such a significant and dangerous bill, especially during our primary election season when election officials have not even had time to weigh in. Please vote no on SB 153.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Angelique Gates

Senior Strategist

Cleveland VOTES