

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

I oppose SB153, and here is just one reason:

I hyphenated my last name when I got married, decades ago. Under the proposed bill, that hyphen would make me ineligible to vote. The bill says Ohio must constantly check voter records against the BMV and Social Security databases. But Social Security can no longer insert a hyphen into anyone's name, because DOGE—the so-called Department of Government Efficiency—broke that feature of the computer system. I found that out from the Beachwood office of Social Security, after my health insurer deleted my hyphen. My insurer said it's because they have to match the Medicare database, which has to match the Social Security database—which can no longer accept hyphens. That flaw now affects untold numbers of married women and people with hyphenated Hispanic surnames, especially. Ohio's SB153 is a bigoted, bureaucratic boobytrap designed to do nothing but stop legal voters from casting a ballot that will actually be counted.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Thomas-Matej