

May 27, 2025

Charles L. Soder  
19520 Beach Cliff Blvd.  
Rocky River, OH 44116

**Dear Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blacksheer and members of the General Government Committee:**

Thanks for considering my testimony. My name is Chuck Soder, and I'm here to express my opposition to Senate Bill 153.

I do agree with the statement that it should be easy to vote and hard to cheat. I've served as a poll worker three times now. I've seen the process up close. It is indeed hard to cheat already.

Statistics that back up: Proponents of this bill mention that six people were (rightly, in my view) prosecuted for voting illegally since 2008. But they account for just .00007% of the electorate. **Less than 1 per million Ohio voters!** Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost admits such cases are rare. A huge understatement.

Far more – far more! – legit voters will be turned away by this bill. It doesn't just require more documentation. It also gets rid of all Ohio drop boxes – which have a strong security record. You're more likely to get into a car crash on the way to your polling place than to have someone tamper with your drop box (no evidence that it's ever happened in Ohio).

But what really bothers me is how this bill makes it much harder to put an issue on the ballot.

It is already extremely difficult to collect *hundreds of thousands* of valid signatures spread across a bare minimum of 44 counties.

Senate Bill 153 would make it even harder. Lots of signatures are thrown out under current law and this would invalidate even more due minor clerical errors and corrections. And it would subject regular people like me to prosecution if they get a free piece of pizza before gathering signatures but don't wear a badge inaccurately portraying them as compensated (a badge designed to portray them as in it for money/not passionate about the cause).

This bill is yet another example of Ohio politicians trying to make it harder and harder to put an issue on the ballot. We all remember the one ballot issue the Ohio Legislature wanted – the one that would've raised the threshold for a ballot issue to pass to 60%. Of course Ohioans rejected it soundly. As a state we understand this fact: **Direct citizen votes carry**

***more democratic weight than votes by politicians.*** After all, politicians represent us second hand. And often don't know or care what we actually want.

Supporters of bills like Senate Bill 153 must not like it when we citizens get to make decisions for ourselves. They must think we're too stupid to do so. Or they have ulterior motives.

So don't be a supporter. Vote "no" on Senate Bill 153.

Thanks for considering my testimony.

Chuck Soder