

I am Peter Maxwell, a U.S. citizen who lives in Westerville.

I don't understand the need for Senate Bill 153 and House Bill 233.

Reading Frank Larosa's Secretary of State website from January 7, 2022:

"post-election audit results of the 2021 election show a 99.9% accuracy rate. The accuracy should reinforce every voter's belief that their vote mattered and was counted accurately.

Ohioans can be proud that our state runs secure and fair elections.

The Buckeye State stands out as the gold standard when it comes to election administration.

I put my faith in the bipartisan local election officials who do the tireless work of running our elections."

Despite Frank LaRosa's faith in the process, legislators overhauled the voting process that year, presenting a bill for Governor DeWine's signature in January 2023 that drastically changed the process, instituting strict photo ID requirements that have made voting much more difficult for many Ohioans. Now it is proposed that limitations on citizens' right to vote should be further drastically increased.

Apparently legislators still do not share Frank LaRosa's faith in either the state's election process or the ability of bipartisan local election officials to run secure, fair elections.

I retired two years ago and have volunteered to serve as a precinct election official - that's PEO. The PEO team at each voting location includes roster judges, voting machine judges, paper ballot judges, a voting location manager, and high school volunteers.

Our direction from Steve Beelen, Franklin County's PEO manager, is - quote - "to conduct fair, impartial elections that are well organized & professionally managed, assisting voters and ensuring that the election is conducted lawfully."

We do.

For this week's election I, and all other PEO's, had three training sessions to review and remind us of the steps and procedures to be followed to ensure that all voters are verified as either regular voters or provisional voters before allowing them to cast a ballot.

Regular voters had their photo ID's carefully checked against the voter registration roll to verify accuracy.

Those that were identified as provisional voters have four days to submit required additional information at the county board of elections office in order for their vote to be counted.

This painstaking process ensures accurate voting results.

None of the PEO's at my precinct could come up with any reason why instituting drastic changes would provide any positive benefits.

Please do not place further obstacles to citizens participating in elections and obstacles to the PEO's conducting those elections.

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy - our nation's strength.

It should be encouraged, not restricted.