

May 25, 2025

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Iris Meltzer and I live in Kent, Ohio I am strongly opposed to SB 153.

This bill is simply the latest attack on Ohio's election laws. Not only is it unnecessary, but it is deeply harmful . Every portion of the bill, including new sections and changes in other sections have been formulated to make it more difficult for Ohio voters to vote and harder to collect petition signatures for potential ballot initiatives. Additionally, it places financial burdens on our already burdened county boards of elections.

Specifically, SB 153 has been written to intimidate Ohioans who are civically active by threatening petition committee members and circulators. Clearly, the intent is to make it harder to successfully gather enough signatures for a ballot initiative. It appears that you are, at the very least, fearful of your constituents.

SB 153 creates an arduous process for verifying citizenship that would end up preventing tens of thousands of eligible Ohio voters from casting a ballot – especially married women, young people, and the less affluent. Our Secretary of State has, on numerous occasions, touted the integrity and veracity of Ohio's elections. The onerous requirements of SB 153 will render all too many eligible voters unable to register. Additionally, the number of provisional ballots cast and rejected will, in effect, disenfranchise all too many Ohioans.

Finally, our local Boards of Elections will be faced with unfunded mandates. They will have to take on additional costs to implement this bill if passed. They will be faced with unnecessary administrative tasks, hiring and training additional staff, engage in demanding administrative tasks, but provided no additional funding support. SB153 is yet another example of a "solution" in search of a problem.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful, extremist and utterly unnecessary bili.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

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