

May 25, 2025

Dear Chairman Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, and Ranking Member Blackshear and members of the General Government Committee,

Hello and thank you for reading my testimony. My name is Lisa and I am from central Ohio. I work in banking and enjoy finding ways to volunteer in my community. I am submitting testimony in opposition to SB 153.

SB 153 is an unnecessary and massive bill which would overhaul our elections by making it harder for Ohioans to vote and collect petitions for ballot measures and overload our already over-worked boards of elections. This bill will not increase security or accuracy in our elections and in fact will likely increase clerical errors and slow down the ballot counting process by adding unnecessary requirements for voters that must be checked by poll workers, but with no additional funding to implement these changes.

SB 153 would require proof of citizenship before voting, which places unnecessary burdens on Ohio voters who may not have easy access to such documentation. It is already illegal for non-citizens to vote so this provision of the bill would place an additional burden on eligible voters based on the false notion that large swaths of non-citizens have been voting in recent elections.

SB 153 would eliminate the use of drop boxes. How exactly are drop boxes a threat to democracy? In what way do they compromise election integrity? Access to drop boxes can help many Ohioans who cannot make it to the polls. This is simply providing Ohioans with more voting options.

SB 153 would require provisional ballots if there is any mismatch between the name or address on the voter's license. If a voter recently moved or changed their name for any reason (like getting married) then voting will be much more difficult for them. Why should voters be punished for common life events?

SB 153 would make it far more difficult to collect signatures for ballot initiatives. All petition signers would have to be registered voters before their signatures could be counted and petition circulators could be subpoenaed for not fully complying with strict rules for signed statements, conditions of compensation, and personally counting the signatures. The process for ballot initiatives led by the people is already strict and this bill would make that process even more cumbersome.

These are only a few of the massive hurdles that this bill would throw into the democratic process. SB 153 is about adding bureaucracy. It is about silencing voters. It is about using non-existent issues as excuses to remove the people from the democratic process. It is a clear power grab by those who do not want to have to listen to the people they represent. As Ohioans, voting and petitioning our government are RIGHTS not privileges. This bill seeks to take those rights away.

I wish to conclude by reiterating my opposition to this bill. The electoral process should work for Ohioans, not bureaucrats.

Thank you,

Lisa Pultz