

May 26, 2025

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

My name is Catherine M. Manzo and I am from Rocky River,  
Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am writing to  
express my opposition to SB 153.

This bill is overly broad and excessively restrictive of Ohioans  
civic rights.

This bill attacks the citizen initiative process, making it more  
difficult and expensive for Ohio citizens to make our voices heard  
at the ballot box. Currently the process is onerous enough for a  
citizen driven, all volunteer effort to gather and submit signatures:

- Be initiated by a petition signed by 1,000 qualified electors.
- Be submitted to both the Secretary of State and Attorney  
General for review.
- Gather signatures equal to at least 6% of the last  
gubernatorial vote, with minimums from 44 counties.
- Meet specific formatting and filing requirements with the  
Secretary of State.

SB 153 makes it harder to register and cast your ballot. This  
impacts a broad array of Ohioans from rural voters who may  
struggle to get to a nearby BMV, to married women who have  
changed their names, to young people. Anyone with a mismatch  
of information at the BMV and on their voting records is at risk of

having their vote thrown out. This is an unduly restrictive solution to a non-existent problem. More people are struck by lightning in a year (approximately 250) than commit voter fraud (62 cases from 1982-2024 <https://electionfraud.heritage.org/search?state=oh>).

SB 153 overloads our local Boards of Elections with unfunded mandates and new requirements while giving them zero additional support. This 200+ page bill adds significant new burdens for Boards of Election, including tedious administrative tasks. At the same time, it eliminates drop boxes, which will require more election staff to be available during early vote season to accept and process ballots.

Voting is our most sacred right as citizens of Ohio. Creating roadblocks to the ballot is undemocratic and not what the people of Ohio voted for in the 1851 Ohio Constitution which established a framework for a more democratic and accountable government, with greater power in the hands of the people. This bill has the direct opposite effect.

Please vote no on SB 153.

Thank you for your time. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Manzo

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