

May 26, 2025

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

My name is M. Jennifer Martin Silva, and I am a registered voter in Cleveland, a wife, a mother and a substitute teacher. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am writing to express my opposition to SB 153. This massive bill is unnecessary and deeply harmful.

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.

I, my husband and my son are all at risk of having our votes thrown out. As you can see by my name I have a first initial, go by my middle name, and when I got married added my husband's name to my last name. However, my voter registration does not spell out my middle name - it is cut off as "Jenni". It has always been this way because their computer system didn't have enough spaces (or so I have been told). My driver license now has my full name written out because of Real ID.

My husband and my son also have Real ID's so their names are fully spelled out, but their voter registrations have an initial.

It is a complete waste of time, forms and staff efforts to have everyone's initials fixed on their voter registrations - which really comes down to waste of tax money to implement this new law.

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.

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.

The legislature should not rush such a significant and dangerous bill, especially during our primary election season when election officials have not even had time to weigh in. Please vote no on SB 153.

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

Sincerely,

M. Jennifer Martin Silva

16306 Edgecliff Avenue

Cleveland, OH 44111

216-252-5868 (landline)