

Elise Foster
3643 Herschel Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45208

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Chair Roegner
Senate General Government Committee
Ohio Statehouse
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, OH 43215

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

My name is Elise Foster, and I've served as a poll election official in Hamilton County since 2020. I'm writing to express my concern about SB153, which risks placing unnecessary burdens on eligible Ohio voters — especially older adults and first-time voters — without clear evidence that such changes are needed.

Over the past several elections, I've seen how Ohio's process works: carefully, professionally, and securely. But I've also seen how quickly voting becomes complicated for people who've done everything right—especially when new documentation requirements enter the picture.

One of the hardest things to witness as a poll worker is the provisional ballot process. It is lengthy, complicated, and often discouraging. Many voters — especially older ones — arrive expecting the process to be time-efficient and seamless, but end up spending ten minutes just filling out a form filled with boxes, fine print, and uncertainty. Some leave unsure if their vote will even count. This new legislation is likely to increase the percentage of voters requiring the provisional process.

Voters like my 88-year-old mother are exactly who I think about when I see legislation like SB153. She has never had a driver's license. Her passport expired years ago. I think about how difficult it would be for someone in her position—someone who has every right to vote but would now need to track down documents across agencies, time zones, and decades just to prove it. In the case these documents are too difficult to track down, the provisional process kicks in and it will be unlikely that she would be able to effectively cure the ballot.

I also worry about what this means for first-time voters. When my own daughter went to the BMV to get her license at age 16, she had to speak up and specifically request the REAL ID

version. It wasn't offered by default. Most teens wouldn't know to do that. Under SB153, that kind of bureaucratic detail could prevent them from registering to vote—through no fault of their own. Not to mention, the documentation requirements are quite difficult given that most 16-year olds don't have utility bills or bank accounts in their names.

Let me be clear: I fully support secure elections, and I believe only eligible citizens should vote. But SB153 creates avoidable barriers for those who *are* eligible—adding complexity, cost, and confusion to a process that should be straightforward for every citizen.

As someone who works the polls and sees the real impact of these laws—not just the intent—I urge you to oppose SB153. Let's ensure our voting system remains both secure and fair for the people it's designed to serve.

Sincerely,

Elise Foster

Concerned Citizen and Poll Election Official, Hamilton County