

**Interested Party Testimony on Senate Bill 153**  
**Boards of Elections Cannot Verify Eligibility to Vote**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony regarding Senate Bill 153. While the intent to improve election integrity is commendable, the current draft of this legislation fails to address a major deficiency in Ohio's elections: it does not provide local election officials with access to databases necessary to verify eligibility—including U.S. citizenship—of individuals registering to vote or casting a ballot. This omission directly undermines the integrity of the voter rolls, but also places Boards of Elections in direct conflict with their responsibilities under federal law.

Currently, Ohio Boards of Elections:

- Do not have access to BMV records to verify an applicant's driver's license or state ID number,
- Do not have access to SSA records to verify the last four digits of the social security number,
- Do not have access to any database to verify the applicant resides at the stated address - or even that the address exists,
- Do not have access to any database to verify an applicant's date of birth matches the name provided,
- Do not have access to any database to verify the applicant is a U.S. citizen.

President Trump's Executive Order 14248 explicitly directs federal agencies—including the Social Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security - to make all relevant citizenship and identity verification databases available to state **and local** election officials. Despite this, SB153 fails to incorporate any provision ensuring such access for Ohio's election officials. As a result, Ohio's Boards of Elections remain unable to lawfully access the very information needed to uphold the security and accuracy of our elections.

To correct this deficiency, **the Committee is urged to adopt an amendment to SB153 and require that all Ohio Boards of Elections be granted secure access to relevant databases to verify the eligibility of both new applicants and existing registered voters.**

This amendment would ensure compliance with the President's Executive Order, equip local election officials with the tools necessary to fulfill their legal responsibilities, and reinforce voter confidence through greater transparency and accountability.

Election integrity cannot be upheld if those tasked with protecting it are denied the fundamental tools to do so. Providing access to these verification systems is not optional—it is a necessity.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and for your commitment to improving Ohio's elections.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Cullison  
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