

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

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Carol Mesnick. I am a resident of Fairview Park, a suburb on the west side of Cleveland. My husband and I own and operate a small business also located in Fairview Park.

I am submitting this written testimony to strongly urge the committee to reject SB 153 and its companion HB 233.

The very first election I voted in was Ohio's 1986 Gubernatorial election. I was eighteen years old. I have voted in every election since then, both as a resident of Ohio (1986-1989, 2004 to present), and Arizona (1989-2004). I find voting thrilling! When my grandmothers were born, people like them were unable to vote. I consider it my sacred duty to vote to honor the sacrifices made by my great-grandmothers, and other patriotic Americans who fought so hard and were subjected to horrific violence so that I could vote. People like John Lewis, Alice Paul, and Lucy Burns.

There are many aspects of SB 153 and HB 233 that are unpatriotic, concerning, and outrageous, but I want to focus on how this bill will disenfranchise Ohio voters. This bill will make voting much more difficult by requiring individuals to visit the BMV, or their county Board of Elections to register or update their information – no more voter registration drives, no more voter registration forms or QR codes at local events, and no more one-stop online voter registration.

This bill would require voters' ID to match voter information exactly. Currently, my passport and my driver's license list my full middle name, but my voter registration name has only my middle initial. Would this bill require me to change my voter information? How will I know? Will I be notified in time before the November 2026 election that I am required to make a change? Would my vote be provisional? What about voters whose license says Mike, but their voter registration says Michael? What about women who changed their name after getting married? If they must prove their citizenship at the BMV or county Board of Elections, will they have to bring a certified copy of their birth certificate, marriage certificate, and/or a passport? What if they don't have these documents? What if their documents were damaged or lost in a flood or fire? Does that mean they would no longer have the right to vote? Thousands of Ohioans, perhaps even hundreds of thousands of Ohioans, from both political parties, would be impacted by this bill.

I ask you to consider my testimony and reject this un-American bill. I will be sure to discuss it with my friends, family, community members, and with my customers at my business.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Carol Mesnick