

Written Testimony SB 153
May 26, 2025

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

My name is Alicia Pagan, and I am a Retired Ohio Public Educator with 27 years experience. I am a resident of Dayton Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am writing to express my opposition to SB 153. In the last seventeen years, as a highschool teacher, one of my fondest memories was sharing with my students the importance of community service and civic engagement. I wanted to teach my students our responsibilities as American citizens. I often shared with my students my enthusiasm for going to vote by wearing my official Ohio 'I voted' sticker to school the next day. I wanted to demonstrate to my students how easy it was to make your voice heard and support the values we hold dear in our Democracy, which is why I am writing today. How do we inspire the next generation to work towards a better tomorrow when we resurrect legislation from a repressive past? This massive bill is unnecessary and deeply harmful. It places roadblocks and obstacles between the voter, the ballot and the American Dream for many.

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 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.

Additionally, 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,
Alicia Pagan
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