

May 25, 2025

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

My name is Richard Silva, and I am a retired civil servant and a Cleveland resident. 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.

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,

Richard L. Silva

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