

October 26, 2025

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

Thank you for your time considering my opposition testimony Senate Bill 153.

I write as a concerned and civically engaged citizen of the State of Ohio. Participating in our democracy through voting is one of our most precious civil rights and duties. Access to free and fair elections is a hallmark of what it means to be American.

SB153 makes it more difficult for citizens in Ohio to access this right and duty. In addition, it adds undue burden on local Boards of Elections without funding to increase staff, and makes it more difficult for citizens to engage in direct democracy through petitioning. For all these reasons, I ask you to vote no on SB153.

Our own Secretary of State and Governor have said on multiple occasions that Ohio's elections are secure and accurate. The provisions in SB153 add undue bureaucracy to the voter registration process, making it likely that huge numbers of legal Ohio voters will have to cast provisional ballots because of small details like a missing middle initial on one of their forms of identification. Additionally, requiring people to provide proof of citizenship upon registering to vote will be challenging for many Ohioans, especially those who have changed their name since such proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, was issued, as is often the case when a woman gets married. What if her birth certificate reads a different name than her current passport or driver's license?...More steps and red tape, making it less likely that she will get registered to vote.

Removing the option of delivering ballots to the Board of Elections via dropboxes also makes it more difficult for people to vote. If a person does not trust that their ballot will arrive in a timely way via the mail, dropboxes are an excellent way to make early voting available to all Ohioans. These are secure boxes, monitored by cameras, opened by members of both parties, and accessible to voters outside the times the BoEs are open. If anything, we should be expanding the availability of ballot dropboxes, not eliminating them.

SB153 makes it harder for concerned citizens to engage in signature gathering for citizen initiatives and referendums. Having to wear a badge indicating "compensation" for working to collect signatures, even if said compensation is a donut or a cup of coffee during a training session, will make it more likely that the public will be confused about who is supporting an issue, thinking these volunteers are receiving a paycheck, when they are volunteering their time for an issue they care about. Monitoring who is wearing these badges, a task assigned to Boards of Elections, adds additional burden to already stretched thin staff at these offices.

For all these reasons and more, I ask you to vote no on SB153, and refer you to the excellent testimony submitted by Jen Miller of the League of Women Voters Ohio and Kelly Dufour of Common Cause Ohio for additional details and reasons to vote no on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "V.M. McMillan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria McMillan
2690 Eaton Rd.
Shaker Heights, OH