

October 27, 2025 for October 28, 2025 Senate General Government Committee Hearing

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

Thank you for considering my testimony below. My name is Lynn Buffington. My husband and I and our two children moved to Beavercreek from Tennessee in 2000. We now have two grown children, one granddaughter and another on the way. My husband is still working; I am retired.

I have grave concerns about the consequences of SB 153 and the House version, HB 233. Please do not advance SB 153.

SB 153 will make voting harder for everyday citizens in Ohio for no justifiable reasons. I am especially concerned about the experience of Kansas. SB 153 includes new documentation requirements for U.S. citizenship as part of voter registration. As you likely know, when Kansas implemented a similar requirement, 12% of eligible voters were unable to provide the required documentation, many because they could not procure copies of birth certificates that met the requirement. Ultimately Kansas backtracked on this requirement. Let Ohio learn from Kansas! Ohioans do not want more than one in ten eligible voters disenfranchised! Like other provisions in this bill, this is a "solution" in search of a problem. It's true that a few non-citizens have been found to mistakenly register to vote in Ohio, but these few do not go on to actually vote or try to vote.

Eliminating drop boxes is another harmful provision and also a "solution" in search of a problem, and, like the proposed citizenship documentation requirements, is a "solution" that would bring great difficulties to voters, again for no good reason. I know of many people in my own community who use drop boxes. There are many reasons that people find it very difficult to vote in person or to use the post office to safely mail a ballot. These reasons include the demands of caregiving for both the young and old, the difficulty of arranging transportation in a one car household in which family members work multiple jobs, and all of those situations when combined with constraints from jobs.

I am shocked at the inclusion of punishment for provisional voting. The bill would require removal of a voter from the voter rolls if they vote provisionally and then fail to go to the board of elections to provide the requested follow-up. There are many reasons a voter might not follow-up, including all the reasons I gave above for using a drop box plus the fact that definitive election results have already been publicized.

I also object to the changes to the citizen petition process. This process should not be made more complicated and petition circulators and petition committee members should not be threatened with legal red tape.

Ohioans do not want our government resources of time and money expended in court on legal challenges that would ensue regarding the citizenship requirements and other SB 153 provision. Neither do Ohioans want to pay for the additional work SB 153 requires of boards of election workers. We oppose unnecessary bureaucracy.

Please reject this bill.

Thank you.