

to the Senate General Government Committee,

I am appalled by SB293's attempt to make it even harder for eligible Ohio voters to vote and am calling on all decision makers to defeat it.

This bill throws out valid votes: More than 9,500 ballots were received during the November 2024 four-day post-election window. Ballots that are properly filled out, postmarked on time, and mailed by the legal deadline would be discarded simply because of postal delays. Voters would be punished for something completely outside their control: the speed of the mail.

SB 293 especially harms rural Ohio voters who are subject to slower mail routes and reduced postal service days as well as Ohio seniors and Ohioans with disabilities for whom voting by mail is often the only option. It would also affect Ohio voters without reliable transportation, those living in poverty and students who often don't have their own vehicles.

Ohio's current system works well. Ohio election law already requires mail-in ballots to be postmarked on the day before Election Day. The existing 4-day acceptance period doesn't extend the time Ohio voters can cast a ballot. It's simply a mail delivery window to ensure ballots from eligible voters are counted.

Ohioans trust their mailed ballots will be counted: Of the more than 2.6M Ohioans who voted before Election Day last November, 803,253 (31%) voters placed their trust in the US Postal Service as their preferred method of ballot return.

You must do all you can to ensure a fair voting system for all Ohioans and defeat SB 293.

Sincerely, Peggy Gish