

Members of the General Government Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on S.B. No. 293.

I urge you to reject this bill in its entirety. Similar to S.B. 153, it is a solution in search of a problem. It violates the spirit of the US Constitution in granting the states to oversee their elections rather than the federal government. Anyone paying attention sees that it is clearly at the behest of President Trump who has been spreading lies about election integrity since his first term. Ohioans deserve independent thought, not lackeys for the people in Washington.

The passage of S.B. No. 293 requires that the thousands of voters who need to vote-by-mail will be held to a different standard as all other voters; their deadline to vote is effectively 4 or more days before actual election day. What does this change accomplish, other than making it harder to have some people's votes count?

In short, the substance of the bill is pure vote suppression and entirely un-American

- This bill throws out valid votes: More than 9,500 ballots were received during the November 2024 four-day post election window (source: Ohio Absentee and Early Voting Dashboard).
- 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: slower mail routes and reduced postal service days mean longer delivery times;
- Ohio seniors and Ohioans with disabilities: voting by mail is often the only option for these voters;
- Ohio voters without reliable transportation: Ohioans living in poverty and students who often don't have their own vehicles would be disproportionately impacted;
- 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 (source: Ohio Absentee and Early Voting Dashboard).

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of how S.B. 293 negatively impacts the voice of the people of Ohio. Please squash its movement along the legislative path.

John Zajc

Cleveland Heights OH