

Chairman Kristina Roegner, Vice Chair Theresa Gavarone, Ranking Member Willis Blackshear, Jr., and esteemed members of the Senate General Government Committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in writing today. My name is Sue Barber. I am a citizen, taxpayer and U.S. Army veteran. I am strongly opposed to SB 293 which, if passed, would require all absentee voter's ballots to be delivered to the appropriate Board of Elections, in person or by mail by the close of the polls (7:30pm) on Election Day in order to be counted.

One of the key foundations of our democracy is our right to vote. Without our right to vote we lose the voice to make decisions in our governance. As a veteran, when stationed overseas I have had the opportunity to cast my vote, by mail-in ballot, so I know firsthand how important it is that this process remain unimpeded. It's easy for those to say that this bill will allow our service members enough time to cast their vote but have you ever relied on our postal system when abroad, I think not.

The mail in ballots used to have seven days after the election to be counted, as long as they were postmarked by Election Day, but in 2023 that was changed to four. Now legislative members in this body want to change that to even less. Talk about restrictive voting laws, what happened to unimpeded access to our electoral process?

In an article in The Ohio Capital Journal, Sen. Gavarone states "Your ballot has to be received on election day, on or before, so that there won't be any ambiguity." So what does ambiguity mean "the quality of being open to more than one interpretation; inexactness." So how does an elector sending in their ballot to register their constitutional right to vote create ambiguity in an electoral system that last year, according to the Ohio Secretary of State, had 99.9% accuracy.

According to the Sec of State's website -

"Recognizing the complexities of voting overseas, both federal and state laws protect the right and ability for uniformed services and overseas U.S. citizens to vote by providing **additional and adequate time** for them to apply for and cast an

absentee ballot. Ballots may be requested by mail, email, or fax, but must be submitted by mail or in person, like any other absentee ballot."

That is why I write to you today regarding my concerns about this bill. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on this harmful bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in writing.

Sincerely,

Sue Barber
North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039