

Dear Senate General Government Committee members,

Thank you for reading my testimony. My name is Rebecca Bralek. I am an Ohio resident and native and I believe strongly in the great idea of a democracy of the people, for the people and by the people.

This means to me that all legal United States of America citizens shall have the ability to have their vote cast and counted.

Because of this very foundational American belief, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 293.

Senate Bill 293 would make it impossible and/or harder for many Ohioans to vote. It would abolish the grace period given for mail-in ballots and require that all absentee ballots be returned to the Board of Elections by the close of polls (7:30 PM) on Election Day. Currently all ballots returned by mail can still be counted if they arrive by the fourth day after Election Day. Less than two years ago, the Ohio Legislature voted to shrink the window for accepting ballots from 10 days to four. With the mail getting slower, this could disqualify thousands of legitimately cast ballots through no fault of their own and will give voters less time to request and mail their ballot. Ohio's current system works well.

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

The bill would especially impact rural voters, the elderly and those with transportation issues:

- 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

I oppose Senate Bill 293 and I respectfully request that you oppose this terrible voter suppression legislation.

Thank you,
Rebecca Bralek