



Testimony by Mia Lewis, Associate Director of Common Cause Ohio
To the Senate General Government Committee
on Senate Bill 293
November 5, 2025

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear and members of the Senate General Government Committee. My name is Mia Lewis. I'm associate director of Common Cause Ohio and here today to provide opposition testimony on Senate Bill 293.

Common Cause is focused on strengthening public participation in our democracy and ensuring every eligible voter can cast a ballot. It would be reasonable to imagine the focus of the Senate General Government Committee would be the same. But Senate Bill 293 would do the opposite by making voting harder.

SB 293 is the latest attempt to limit and curtail access to the ballot for eligible Ohio voters. If this bill becomes law, the ballots of eligible Ohio voters that once were counted without incident would be thrown away uncounted. The very idea of this should be shocking to everyone on this committee.

In November 2024, more than 2.6M Ohioans voted absentee; 800,000+ (31%) voters placed their trust in the US Postal Service as their preferred method of ballot return.

Despite knowing Ohioans rely heavily and consistently on mailing their ballots, two years ago, the state legislature enacted sweeping changes that were both unnecessary and harmful with House Bill 458, including shrinking the window for receiving mailed ballots after Election Day from 10 to four days. A ballot postmarked and mailed before election day and arriving 6 days later would once would have been considered perfectly valid. Now this ballot would be set aside uncounted.

Instead of rectifying this problem, Senate Bill 293 would make it worse by eliminating the mail-in grace period entirely, disenfranchising thousands of Ohioans who did nothing but count on the legal deadline and the US Postal Service to deliver their ballot in a timely way. How does this help Ohio voters or improve our elections? It doesn't.

This bill has moved at lightning speed. It was introduced on October 14 and three weeks later, here it is, starred for a vote after only one party (from Texas) in addition to Sec. LaRose testified in its favor. Elections officials, busy carrying out an election, have not had a chance to weigh in. What is the rush? Are you trying to get it right or get it done? It would seem testimony heard today, however compelling, will fall on deaf ears.

Senate Bill 293 seems to be a quick fix to the Department of Justice threatening to sue on very shaky grounds, at the behest of the President, for political rather than procedural reasons¹. Other states across the country have taken different paths, choosing to defend their constituents' best interest and access to the ballot. Being told that you need to comply with other states is a strange argument on its face. But Sec. LaRose testified to that effect in a different bill's testimony last week²

The US Constitution gives the power to execute elections **to the states**; the federal government was purposefully not given this power. However, here in Ohio, you seem to be working to pacify an overly intrusive federal government chasing a false narrative instead of standing up for Ohio citizens..

If Senate Bill 293 had been enacted prior to November 2024, more than 9,500 Ohioans, but more importantly to you, 2,300 constituents from your districts, would have been silenced³. From the 17 counties represented in your collective districts, 2,308 mailed ballots were received during the legal window you're now wanting to eliminate, from November 6-9 last year.

Senator Gavarone often asks, "Isn't even just one instance of a fraudulent vote too many?" I think these 1,500+ constituents from this committee's districts would agree, that yes, even one of their legal votes tossed out is too many.

If you care about the people, the voters, you represent in your respective districts, Senate Bill 293 should never be voted out of this committee. If it is, we know where you stand.

¹ [DOJ pushes Ohio to change absentee ballot return deadline to Election Day](#)

² <https://ohiochannel.org/collections/ohio-senate-general-government-committee> 10/28/25

³ <https://www.ohiosos.gov/elections/voters/ohio-absentee-data/>

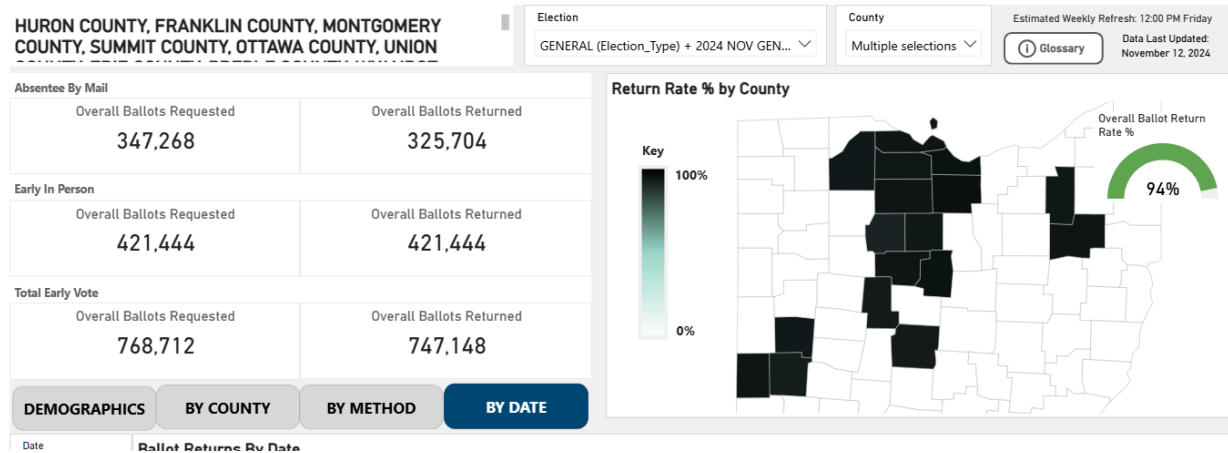
Appendix

More than 2,300 voted ballots were received during November 6-9, 2024 in the 17 counties represented by the members of the Senate General Government Committee.

[SB293_ImpactedNov24_VotersPerCounty](#)

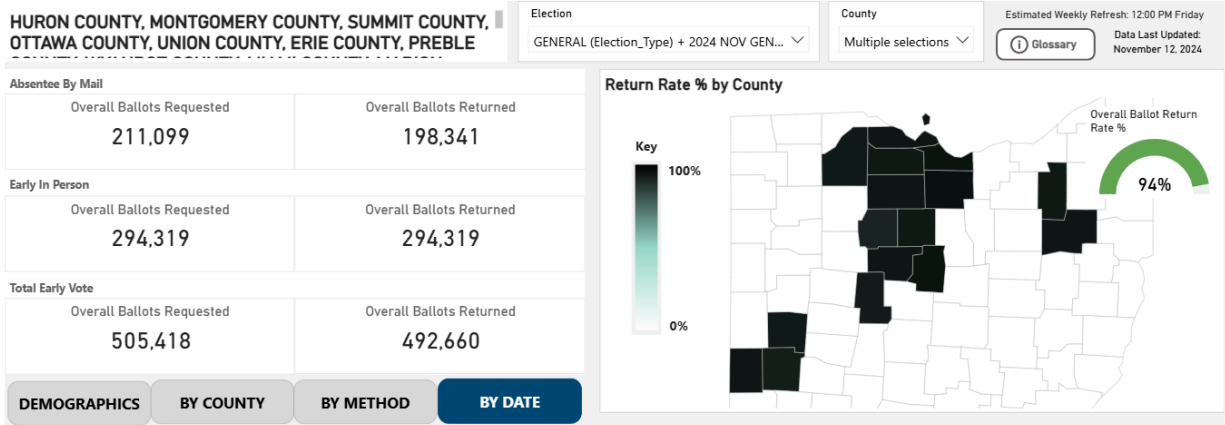
County	District	ABS Mail Ballots Requested	ABS Mail Ballots Returned	Legal four-day window after Election Day				Total
				11/6	11/7	11/8	11/9	
Ottawa	2	3,917	3,696	13	11	12	3	39
Wood	2	11,097	10,396	-	-	-	-	0
Erie	2*	7,797	7,433	43	14	12	1	70
Huron	2*	3,961	3,814	10	8	7	5	30
Miami	5	8,676	8,133	60	-	-	-	60
Preble	5	2,380	2,251	11	3	4	-	18
Montgomery	5*, 6*	50,925	47,200	-	-	-	362	362
Franklin	25*	136,169	127,363	359	156	156	123	794
Crawford	26	3,386	3,187	4	2	4	-	10
Marion	26	3,910	3,689	8	6	2	-	16
Morrow	26	2,430	2,316	7	2	9	2	20
Sandusky	26	3,978	3,745	2	6	5	1	14
Seneca	26	3,617	3,432	21	11	-	-	32
Union	26	5,380	5,034	-	1	-	-	1
Wyandot	26	901	822	5	1	3	-	9
Summit	27*	62,831	59,259	276	138	74	27	515
Stark	27*, 29*	35,913	33,934	110	154	44	10	318
Total		347,268	325,704	929	513	332	534	2,308
Ohio		1,148,455	1,078,103	4,588	2,436	1,496	1,003	9,523

Using these 17 counties represented by the committee.



Date	DROP BOX	EARLY IN PERSON	MAIL	PERSONAL DELIVERY	Ballots Returned (Running Total)
Thu, October 31, 2024	1,805	23,522	10,944	775	2,209,123
Fri, November 01, 2024	2,079	29,002	8,279	733	2,356,697
Sat, November 02, 2024	1,453	20,468	6,654	385	2,463,453
Sun, November 03, 2024	1,354	16,035	3,582	200	2,534,494
Mon, November 04, 2024	2,450	17	6,072	480	2,566,734
Tue, November 05, 2024	3,966	9	8,686	680	2,606,631
Wed, November 06, 2024			929	2	2,611,225
Thu, November 07, 2024	1		513	92	2,613,761
Fri, November 08, 2024			332	1	2,615,264
Sat, November 09, 2024			534	1	2,616,268

Removing Franklin



Date	DROP BOX	EARLY IN PERSON	MAIL	PERSONAL DELIVERY	Ballots Returned (Running Total)
Fri, October 25, 2024	1,733	13,323	4,400	1,133	1,334,044
Sat, October 26, 2024	681	12,492	5,509	373	1,641,162
Sun, October 27, 2024	1,023	6,419	3,261	327	1,686,063
Mon, October 28, 2024	1,259	17,714	7,592	721	1,831,389
Tue, October 29, 2024	1,535	17,891	2,820	712	1,956,328
Wed, October 30, 2024	1,370	16,837	7,887	787	2,084,034
Thu, October 31, 2024	933	16,284	4,671	747	2,209,123
Fri, November 01, 2024	1,024	21,046	4,051	714	2,356,697
Sat, November 02, 2024	794	14,550	4,896	384	2,463,453
Sun, November 03, 2024	811	11,425	168	199	2,534,494
Mon, November 04, 2024	1,435	17	4,901	480	2,566,734
Tue, November 05, 2024	1,973	8	4,741	680	2,606,631
Wed, November 06, 2024			570	2	2,611,225
Thu, November 07, 2024			357	3	2,613,761
Fri, November 08, 2024			176	1	2,615,264
Sat, November 09, 2024			411		2,616,268

Total ABS mail requested: 211,099

Total ABS returned by mail: 198,341

Total ABS returned by mail within four day window: 570 + 357 + 176 + 411 = **1,514**

Sources:

[Current Ohio Senate Districts](#)

[Absentee and Early Voting Data Dashboard](#)