



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

State Representative Thomas Hall

Thank you Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, and Ranking Member Kelly for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HCR 5 - HCR 5 is the Ohio General Assembly's opportunity to reject Washington DC's unconstitutional over-reach into state elections. The proposed federal legislation known as HR 1 would take control away from the states and give the federal government authority over how to run elections. Article I, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution states that "the Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof," but that "Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of choosing Senators." HR 1 is unconstitutional and would be detrimental to elections across the country.

In our own state of Ohio, a state whose elections have long been under the microscope of the nation, we have developed a system that has ensured voters have confidence in the outcome of our elections. Voter fraud and voter suppression are exceedingly rare. The efforts put forth in recent years by our Secretary of State Frank LaRose have strengthened the security of our elections and we have become a national model. States are even coming to us to learn about our best election practices so they can mirror them back in their states.

On November 3, 2020, Ohio executed our most successful election in history. Voter turnout for our state was a record-breaking 74 percent with 5,974,121 Ohioans casting a ballot. This surpasses the all-time previous record from 2008 by 200,000 votes. Early and absentee voting increased by 75 percent compared to 2016 figures. 94 percent of all absentee ballots were returned, breaking another state record. Despite the challenges the COVID-19 pandemic presented, Ohioans made their voice heard through our state's election process. Ohio knows how to run a successful election and would not benefit from intervention by the feds.

Luckily, Ohio did not have the issues that plagued other states during the 2020 election. There were problems with how some states ran elections that came to light and many of those states are currently looking at how to improve their elections systems. However, that does not mean that a federal takeover of the process is a good solution. Many unfunded mandates in HR 1 have unrealistic timelines and do not take into consideration that what works for one state might not work for another. Each state needs to examine their own population and unique needs when determining how to run their elections, including innovations and improvements that may be necessary.



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H.R. 1 legalizes ballot harvesting, forces states to count ballots that arrive by mail as late as 10 days after the election, and bans state voter ID requirements. These provisions will erode voter trust and create a lack of confidence in results, thus inciting chaos and confusion to our elections process.

This resolution will affirm the Ohio General Assembly's duty to carry out elections the constitutional way. I ask you to join me in support of HCR 5 so that we can send a message to our national politicians that we oppose this legislation. I thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony today, and will now take your questions.