



September 16, 2020

Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee
Chairman Coley
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: ONA Opposition to House Bill 680

Dear Members of the Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on House Bill 680 (HB 680). The Ohio Nurses Association (ONA) is the recognized leader and advocate for professional nurses and nursing in Ohio. Established in 1904, ONA was founded on the principles of protecting, promoting and advancing the profession of nursing. As an association of nearly 10,000 nurses, ONA strives to improve and protect the health and wellbeing of all Ohio's citizens. ONA believes HB 680 threatens the integrity of Ohio's November elections and disenfranchises Ohioans who rely on early in-person absentee voting or those who choose to cast an absentee ballot by mail. Additionally, ONA believes HB 680 places Ohioans at an unnecessary risk during an uncontrolled pandemic.

HB 680 effectively shortens the absentee ballot request deadline from the Saturday before an election to a full week before an election, essentially rolling back the deadline by four days. ONA believes that this voter suppression tactic will lead to more people visiting the polls on Election Day to cast their vote in person. This will lead to long lines at polling locations, where individuals will come in contact with large crowds where social distancing is highly unlikely. Our country is in the midst of a global pandemic and it's highly unlikely that COVID-19 and the spread of this virus will not be a concern come November. ONA believes that Ohioans should not have to choose between their health and safety over their civic rights as an American. Nurses across Ohio have been fighting this pandemic for over six months and as an organization, we believe it is our duty to highlight the potential health impact on our communities.

ONA joins the substantial list of opponents of HB 680 and stands to continue to protect the health and wellbeing of all Ohioans, as well as our democracy during a global pandemic. We respectfully ask that you stand with Ohio nurses and voters and reject HB 680.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Be Well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Ochs".

Lisa Ochs, Chief Executive Officer
Ohio Nurses Association