

61st House District

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Committees

Vice Chair Energy and Natural
Resources
Primary and Secondary Education
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Beth Lear

State Representative

June 25, 2024

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and the Members of the Government Oversight Committee

I share Representative Wiggam's concern about securing our voter identification process. We need to provide greater assurance for Ohioans that those voting in our elections are legally permitted to vote here and are actually the people who are registered in our system.

In my own district poll workers and voters have justified the need to provide increased security. In two different rural precincts I was informed voters came in to vote on election day and were forced to vote provisionally because, when they presented their ID, they were informed they'd already voted. In fact, these citizens had not voted. Someone had used their names to get absentee ballots and stripped them the right to vote and know the votes would be counted.

If we pass this legislation, we'll be making fraudulent absentee voting much more difficult by improving requirements to prove who you say you are when you register. Whether you believe there is fraud or not, many Ohioans do and my voters from the 61st House District who were disenfranchised know something fishy is happening. Poll workers need to be vigilant in reporting these issues, but as Legislators we have the responsibility to make cheating more difficult. Let's close this identification loophole for all who vote in Ohio and protect the rights of our citizens to know their vote is secure.

Thank you for your time this morning. Please pass House Bill 552 out of committee so we can finish the work in the Senate and add another layer of necessary security to our elections.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Lear".

Beth Lear
State Representative