



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Catherine Turcer, Common Cause Ohio: cturcer@commoncause.org, 614-579-5509

Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Urges Fair Committee Process for HJR 1

COLUMBUS, OHIO — Our process to amend the Ohio Constitution is rigorous, fair, and most importantly, democratic. The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition firmly believes that House Joint Resolution 1, the power grab that would cement minority rule in our Constitution, is unnecessary and undermines our democracy. Now entering its initial rounds of hearings, the committee rules recently released by the Constitutional Resolutions committee only add insult to injury. Where traditionally all testimony is considered, the new rules restrict testimony to **invitation only**, limit the number of witnesses and the time they can present, limit questions by committee members, and more. The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition opposes these rules as democracy and voting rights leaders and organizations call for a fair committee process.

The following statement is attributed to leaders in the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition:

The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition is disappointed by the new committee rules under which the Constitutional Resolutions committee will operate during the upcoming HJR 1 hearings. Lawmakers introduced this legislation under the guise of increasing fairness in our Constitutional amendment process, yet these rules convey the exact opposite. By severely limiting witnesses to eight individuals for each hearing, hosting invite-only testimonies, and restricting time allotted for questions, lawmakers are rushing and limiting dialogue about the sacred, long-standing tradition of citizen-initiated, ballot campaigns.

These new, last minute committee rules silence Ohioans and deny the public the opportunity to participate, effectively shutting off debate on the undemocratic, unnecessary bill aimed at undermining the sacred principle of 'one person, one vote.' We find it alarming that lawmakers would believe such a manufactured way of completing hearings would result in an accurate representation of the will of the people.

To preserve our legislative process, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition strongly urges lawmakers to conduct a full and fair committee process for HJR 1, as they would any other bill. If passed, this legislation would harshly impact Ohioans' ability to amend our state constitution. A proposed

change to the Ohio Constitution of this magnitude must be handled with the seriousness and transparency it deserves.

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*The **Ohio Voter Rights Coalition** is a non-partisan network of local, state, and national voter advocates dedicated to ensuring that all elections are modern, secure, and accessible to all Ohioans. The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Steering Committee includes Ohio Voice, League of Women Voters of Ohio, Common Cause Ohio, All Voting is Local Ohio, and the ACLU of Ohio. For more information, visit ohiovoterrights.org.*