



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 19, 2023

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Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Rebukes Committee Passage of SJR 2

COLUMBUS, OHIO — Today, the Ohio Senate General Government Committee passed Senate Joint Resolution 2 (SJR 2), an unnecessary, unfair, undemocratic, and unpopular effort to make it harder for Ohioans to have their voices heard. Raising the approval threshold to 60% to amend our State Constitution, SJR 2 is an insidious power grab by lawmakers, and the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition is deeply disappointed that the committee members allowed it to move forward. SJR 2 was also amended during committee to mirror the exact language in House Joint Resolution 1, its companion bill in the Ohio House, adding even more egregious restrictions to the resolution, including:

- Changing the amount of required signatures to place a matter on the ballot from at least 5% of all voters (in the most recent governor election) in 44 counties to at least 5% in all 88 counties;
- Eliminating the 10-day “cure” period whereby those submitting signatures for ballot initiatives can submit additional signatures, if needed, when they fall below the required number because of rejected signatures.

SJR 2 strips power from voters who have had the ability to amend the Ohio Constitution since 1912. This resolution is a threat to the core foundations of our democracy and a clear attempt to bend the rules in order to keep the power concentrated with a small minority of Ohioans.

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

“Earlier today, the Senate General Government Committee completely disregarded the voices of thousands of Ohioans when they voted SJR 2 out of committee. They also ignored a broad coalition of more than 225 organizations that vehemently oppose this attack on direct

democracy. Lawmakers are blatantly tossing out the will of the people and violating the long-standing tradition of citizen-initiated ballot campaigns.

We have watched some politicians prioritize special interests over people, but we can still stop this undemocratic, unfair, unpopular, and unnecessary measure. We must protect our freedom to determine our future in Ohio, not permanently change our Constitution to give up our fundamental rights. We call on the Ohio Senate to vote no on SJR 2 in order to preserve the sacred principle of 'one person, one vote.' If passed by the Senate and the House, we will do everything in our power to defeat this unpopular proposal at the ballot box, and we expect Ohio voters to fiercely defend the ability to create positive change by amending our Constitution. Our legislators must put an end to SJR 2 to protect our citizen-led democracy, but if they do not, we expect Ohio voters to do so."

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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.*