



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2021

Contact:

Catherine Turcer, Common Cause Ohio: (614) 579-5509 or

Jen Miller, League of Women Voters of Ohio: (614) 563-9543

Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Criticizes Proposed Barriers to Voting

The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition (OVRC) issued the following statement today in response to House Bill 294, the new barriers to voting just introduced in the Ohio General Assembly.

As voter advocates, our mission is to advocate for modern, safe and accessible elections for all Ohio voters, and fair legislative maps that allow voters to choose their representatives, not the other way around. We want to build on the success of the 2020 election by making improvements that are wanted and needed by voters and election officials alike. We need solutions that will move us forward, not backwards. These reforms include:

- More secure dropbox locations for those who vote-by-mail, not reduced access
- More early voting locations in counties that want them
- A vote-by-mail system where voters can request applications online and not worry about postage to return their ballots

While we are still reviewing the fine details of this legislation, we are encouraged to see that this proposed legislation contains potential improvements such as automated voter registration, online absentee ballot requests, acceptance of electronic utility bills as a form of identification, and the codification of election administration plans. We have long advocated for these common-sense changes to make our system more modern, secure and accessible.

Nevertheless, that does not offset our concerns about provisions that would unfairly and unnecessarily create new barriers for Ohioans to exercise their freedom to vote. Any proposal that does the following is unacceptable:

- Reduces access to secure, efficient drop boxes
- Undermines Ohioans' freedom to vote in the manner of their choice

- Requires excessive and complicated identification rules that create unnecessary work for elections officials and ultimately deny eligible voters access to the ballot
- Makes it harder for active-duty military voters overseas to vote.

We will remain steadfastly committed to protecting the freedom to vote and we will fight any efforts to silence any Ohioan, whether they be rural Ohioans, senior citizens, Black and Brown voters, students, voters with disabilities, low-income Ohioans, and active duty military. [Click here](#) to read the proposed legislation.

###

The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition is Ohio's premier coalition of nonpartisan voter advocates dedicated to ensuring that our elections are modern, secure and accessible to all Ohioans. For more information, visit ohiovoterrights.org.