



Written Testimony of Chad Ennis
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Senate Bill 153
Ohio Senate Committee on General Government
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Chairman Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding Senate Bill 153.

My name is Chad Ennis, and I am the Vice President of Honest Elections Project Action, a nonprofit entity dedicated to defending the right of every American to vote in free and honest elections.

SB 153 makes several changes to the Ohio Election Code. While I cannot cover all of that today, I would like to highlight the necessity for some of these changes and how they impact election integrity.

The first is the change requiring verification of United States citizenship for every voter. This is critically important. Secretary LaRose has been a national leader on this issue. In August he announced his office [located 597 voters](#) who were on the Ohio rolls but were not citizens. Of those 597, 138 had actually voted in Ohio elections.

Some will say that these numbers are too small to matter, but every election cycle brings numerous races decided by just a handful of votes. The Public Interest Legal Foundation has created a [database](#) that tracks the number of tied and close elections nationwide. The list is not comprehensive but gives the floor. In 2024 in Ohio, there were eight elections that were either tied or decided by a single vote. If any of those 138 non-citizens voted in these elections, they may have cast the deciding vote. Illegitimate votes have real repercussions.

Second, SB 153 makes many important changes that bring greater transparency and accountability to the process of circulating petitions. The bill requires circulators to submit to the jurisdiction of Ohio state courts. This is important because many of the individuals gathering signatures are from out of state. Once they leave, it is extremely difficult—but incredibly important—to get them to come back for any legal proceeding. The bill will allow for some measure of control to get these folks back to Ohio.

SB 153 also has provisions that require the disclosure of the identity of the supervisors of circulators. If you are paid for this task, you must disclose it to the Secretary of State. Again, this adds transparency to the system to make sure that the people in charge are accountable if there is a problem. In that same vein, SB 153 requires paid circulators to wear a badge to identify themselves as paid canvassers. Voters deserve to know who they are giving their signature and personal information to and that the canvassers collecting this sensitive information must protect it and ensure it is turned in to the proper authorities.



Finally, the bill would require anyone who signs a petition to be a registered voter in Ohio *before* signing. This is important for two reasons. First, it aids election officials who must verify these signatures and avoid fraudulent or duplicate signatures. Second, it helps to ensure that the process of amending Ohio's constitution begins with the signatures and voices of Ohio voters.

Ohioans deserve elections they can trust, and SB 153 contains critical reforms that will bring greater transparency and accountability to the process. Ohio is a national leader in election reform. Last year, you passed a groundbreaking law to eliminate foreign funding in the ballot measure process. Now, with SB 153, lawmakers have the chance to bring greater safeguards to the voting and initiative processes. I encourage you to swiftly pass this measure.

Thank you for considering this testimony, and I welcome any questions you may have.