



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Voter Rights Coalition Condemns Sub. House Bill 472, Lawmakers' Latest Effort to Dismantle Absentee Voting**

**COLUMBUS, OH** — Today, the Ohio Senate General Government Committee adopted a substitute version of House Bill 472 that now includes photo ID requirements for absentee ballot requests. The bill utilizes vague, confusing language to create a photo ID verification portal and/or requires Ohio voters to submit a photocopy of their drivers' license when voting by mail. Prior to the additions created by the substitute bill, HB 472 received broad bipartisan support as legislation solely intended to waive fees for birth certificates and state IDs for homeless individuals. **The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition condemns this egregious attempt to disenfranchise Ohio voters who utilize mail-in voting, including those who are elderly, living in rural areas, and are disabled or have mobility issues.**

*In response, members of the Coalition issued the following statement.*

“Substitute House Bill 472 not only offers confusing, misguided approaches to ‘proving’ voter eligibility, but it does not factor in financial costs, data security, voter education and access to technology for Ohio voters,” **Catherine Turner, Executive Director, Common Cause Ohio.** “The last minute amendment to the bill creates a significant technological challenge by proposing an online portal for verification, an unfunded mandate for boards of elections that requires voters submit both a screen capture of an ID and a face video recording.”

“Lawmakers’ decision to take a bill that passed with nearly unanimous bipartisan support and attempt to manipulate it into an effort to strip away access to vote by mail from Ohio voters is an insult to the democratic process,” **said Steve David, Ohio Director for All Voting Is Local Action.** “In their haste to blindly follow executive action on voting rights, we are witnessing

elected officials disenfranchise their own voters who show they want and deserve the access to the ballot through an already safe and secure system.”

“Veterans, people with disabilities, rural Ohioans, seniors, and student voters are more likely to rely on absentee voting, which already includes a robust security framework in Ohio,” **added Jen Miller, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio.** “Sub. House Bill 472 is yet another unfunded mandate that will only place undue burdens on Ohio voters and Boards of Elections alike under the false narrative of election integrity. We cannot stand by as lawmakers misuse the political process to make hasty, unnecessary, costly, and dangerous changes to election laws.”

“What started as a straightforward, nonpartisan bill addressing fees for birth certificates and IDs for homeless individuals has now been co-opted by election deniers still re-litigating President Trump's 2020 defeat,” **said Collin Marozzi, Advocacy Director of the ACLU of Ohio.** “Sub. HB 472 fails to address key differences surrounding the purpose of voter ID requirements for in-person voting and the need for absentee ballots. Instead, the bill erects complicated, multi-step procedures that will undoubtedly have negative consequences. This half-baked addition should be stripped from HB 472 so the underlying bill can move forward untarnished.”

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*The **Ohio Voter Rights Coalition** is a nonpartisan 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 Action Ohio](#), and the [ACLU of Ohio](#). For more information, visit [ohiovoterrights.org](http://ohiovoterrights.org).*