

**Proponent Testimony**  
**SB 212**  
**Ken Terry**  
**Ohio Association of Election Officials**

Chairman Coley, Ranking Member Yuko and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee:

My name Ken Terry and I am director of the Allen County Board of Elections. I also serve as legislative co-chair for the Ohio Association of Election Officials (OAEO). I am here to offer OAEO's support for SB 212, legislation that allows boards of elections to streamline operations at the polls on Election Day, and eliminate an unnecessary mailing to individuals who have been reported as deceased to county boards.

Let me first address the provision in SB 212 that allows boards of elections to reduce the number of poll workers on Election Day. As was noted in sponsor testimony, this provision comes with two restrictions. First, it only applies if a county is utilizing electronic poll books. Second, it only applies to polling locations where multiple precincts are housed. In recent years, the legislature has enacted several bills that have allowed boards to streamline their Election Day operations. Among these was legislation that allowed us to utilize a centralized check-in process for voters to help make sure people are not voting in the wrong precinct. In addition, the recent appropriation for electronic poll books was a huge step forward for our state in modernizing our voting system.

SB 212 is the next logical step in this process. We have gained numerous efficiencies at the polls through the use of centralized check-in and e-poll books. It is now to the point where four poll workers in each precinct simply are not necessary in multi-precinct locations. Poll workers are our

single biggest Election Day expense and recruiting a sufficient number them is increasingly difficult. SB 212 allows us to address both of these issues. Also, it is extremely important to note that this provision is completely optional. No county will have to reduce poll workers unless their board, by a bipartisan vote, believes it will be beneficial to the process.

The second provision in SB 212 deals with the so called “death notice” that boards are now required to send to voters when we have been informed that they are deceased. The 130<sup>th</sup> General Assembly passed SB 200, needed legislation that allowed the Secretary of State and local boards of elections to share data with a variety of government agencies in order to more accurately maintain our voter rolls. Included in this legislation was a new requirement to mail a notice to any voter our system flags as deceased.

Since this provision has been enacted, boards throughout the state have received numerous complaints from spouses and loved ones of deceased voters who have been mailed this notice. The legislature was well intentioned in passing this provision. It was meant to be a safeguard to ensure that no voter was erroneously removed from the voting rolls. Unfortunately, the law has proven to be, and pardon the pun, overkill. While mistakes do happen when managing voter rolls that contain millions of people, protections already exist to make sure voters can exercise their right to vote, and have that vote counted, even if they were accidentally or erroneously removed from the rolls. I would be remiss if I did not point out that these mistakes are extremely rare. It has become apparent to us that the solution that was enacted in SB 200 to address this problem results in more issues than in solves.

Mr. Chairman this concludes my remarks. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee might have.