



## Ohio Environmental Council [ Action Fund ]

November 30, 2022

**To:** Members of the Ohio House of Representatives  
**From:** Pete Bucher, Interim President, Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund  
**Re:** Substitute House Bill 294

Dear Honorable Representatives,

I am writing to inform you that the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) Action Fund will be scoring Substitute House Bill 294 for the purposes of our Legislative Scorecard for the 134th Ohio General Assembly. **We urge a NO vote on Sub. HB 294 in the House Government Oversight Committee, and if it makes it to the floor of the House, we urge a NO vote there as well.** To the extent that Sub. HB 294 passes, the OEC Action Fund will be doing extensive public education on the content and the votes on this legislation due to its detrimental impact to Ohio's democracy.

In particular, we oppose Sub. HB 294 because it only serves to create additional barriers for Ohioans pursuing their right to vote. We should be modernizing Ohio's election system, rather than complicating it.

Specifically, we recommend removing the following policies, among others, from Sub. HB 294:

- The elimination of Early Voting on the Monday before Election Day
- The explicit prohibition of the payment of prepaid postage for absentee ballots
- The prohibition upon Boards of Elections from counting a ballot if it is not included in the specific envelopes sent to voters
- The three-tiered voter ID system for absentee ballots that may confuse voters and deter them from casting their ballot
- Other proposed changes, including potential shifts to Ohio's Voter ID laws

These issues make this bill overall bad policy for Ohioans. Finally, we reiterate the need to amend the bill to include Automatic Voter Registration (not automated voter registration) and Electronic Absentee Ballot Request systems.

At the OEC Action Fund, we know a healthy environment can only be ensured if we also have a healthy democracy. Sub. HB 294 does not further these goals.

If you have any questions, please direct them to Pete Bucher at [pbucher@theoec.org](mailto:pbucher@theoec.org).

Sincerely,

Pete Bucher  
Interim President  
OEC Action Fund