



Ohio Environmental Council
[Action Fund]

Opponent Testimony - Substitute House Bill 472

Ohio Senate General Government Committee

June 9, 2026

Good morning, Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear Jr., and members of the committee. My name is Spencer Dirrig, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund. Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony to the recent changes regarding HB 472.

We work on decisions that shape Ohio's air, water, energy, and land, and every one of them is made by people that Ohioans put in office. We believe in something simple: **unless every eligible voter can cast a ballot and be heard, our government cannot truly reflect the people it serves.** A policy that keeps eligible Ohioans from the ballot does not just burden those voters. It distorts the decisions made in these chambers. That is why we oppose HB 472, as we opposed SJR 10.

I ask you to respect Ohio voters and the legislative process. Do NOT let HB 472 pass this committee without a meaningful opportunity for real discussion regarding the new provisions added to HB 472. From what we can tell, the amendments may kill mail-in voting in Ohio, a process used safely and securely by Ohioans for many years regardless their political party. The technology discussed in the amendments will likely be challenging for many people to utilize when they vote.

Nothing in the bill explains how our private data (including "a short video of the applicant's face") will be protected, who will have access to it, or how it will be kept. There are no cost estimates for these new electronic systems/portal, the maintenance, training, security features, voter education, or data retention. Who will oversee this sensitive portal with everyone's most sensitive information (including photos of IDs, passports and facial videos)? That is not in the bill.

Until today, HB472 was a bipartisan bill that would waive ID and birth certificate fees for Ohioans who lack a permanent residence. HB 472 should return to that purpose, with its anti-democracy amendments removed.

Respectfully submitted,

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