



OHIO BUSINESS PRO-DEMOCRACY SIGN-ON LETTER

Protect our freedom to vote how we choose!

Ohioans can be proud that we have an election system that is safe and secure. A record-breaking six million Ohioans turned out to vote in 2020. Our state's success is due in large part to flexible options to vote: by mail, early in person or on Election Day. Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose [continues to praise](#) the hard working elections officials from this past election. "The incredible accuracy of the results as reflected in the post-election audits should make every Ohioan proud not only of their bipartisan election officials, but of the system we have in place. Ohio ran a fair and accurate election." (The Associated Press).

Yet despite this success, we are now witnessing [legislative efforts](#) aimed at not only undermining the administration of elections, but actually attempting to erect barriers to the ballot for Ohioans. These efforts are misguided and must be opposed. As of March 24, legislators nationwide have introduced 361 anti-voter bills with restrictive provisions in 47 states and Ohio lawmakers are proposing their own changes.

As private-sector business leaders who sit at the helm of organizations that employ hundreds of thousands of Ohioans, it is incumbent upon us to speak out against proposals that could interfere with any person's right to vote.

In this year's legislative session, lawmakers are [proposing bills](#) that could do just that. These proposals are a concerted effort from extremists in Ohio -- and across the nation -- who wish to perpetuate a negative narrative about our elections for the purpose of undermining and dismantling our democratic institutions. We cannot turn a blind eye; it's up to us to make a stand to ensure our freedom to vote is protected.

Even the sponsors of this legislation know the truth. "[We] were able to conduct an election in a pandemic that no one doubts was free and fair," [according to Bill Seitz](#) (R-Cincinnati). So then why is he proposing sweeping voter restrictions? As business leaders with deep ties to Ohio's

communities, we want to see Ohio lawmakers build on a historic election. Our legislators must become champions of pro-voter bills that protect Ohioans freedom to vote how we choose!

We stand opposed to restrictive ID requirements and cuts to early voting methods. Instead of taking us backwards, Ohioans need to look forward by making these equitable improvements:

- Expand access to dropboxes by permitting counties to have more than one secure ballot drop box that is accessible 24 hours a day,
- Modernize our absentee ballot system by permitting Ohioans to request absentee ballot applications online,
- Permit counties to have the option of more than one early in person voting location, and
- Create fair legislative maps that allow voters to choose their representatives, not the other way around.

Attempts to disenfranchise Ohio voters are not “election reform” and cannot be tolerated. As Ohio business leaders, we call on Ohio lawmakers to stand up for democracy.

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