

Sub. HB 294

Erecting New Barriers to the Ballot

Last updated: 11/17/22

Good

- Appropriates funds for the purchase of electronic poll books.
- Permits all 17 year olds to become poll workers.
- Requires county Boards of Election to create and publish Election Administration Plans.

Bad

- Eliminates automated voter registration and verification from HB 294.
- Prohibits Secretary of State or Boards of Election from sending unsolicited absentee ballot request forms.
- Prohibits prepaid return postage for absentee ballot requests and absentee ballots.
- Requires citizenship status to be listed on Ohio driver's licenses.
- Eliminates electronic forms of utility bills, bank statements, and government checks as supplemental identification from HB 294.
- Eliminates the last day of early voting.
- Shortens the absentee ballot request window by 4 days for mail-in requests, and by 7 days for online requests.
- Shortens grace period for Boards to accept ballots that were postmarked on time but delivered by mail after Election Day, from 10 days to 7 days. This includes ballots from overseas and military voters.
- Limits county Boards of Election to 3 drop boxes only at the county board office.
- Eliminates curbside voting provisions from HB 294.
- Grandchildren continue to be the only blood-relative excluded from being able to drop off absentee ballots. Creates new criminal penalties for unauthorized ballot returns.
- Makes it more difficult for voters to propose an alternative form of county government (e.g. county charter).

Needs a Closer Look

- Creates an Online Absentee Ballot Request Portal.
 - Online request deadline is 10 days prior to the election. All other request deadlines are 7 days.
 - Users must have a driver's license or state identification card.
- Codifies Ohio's Early In-Person Voting Schedule.
 - Reallocates previous Monday voting hours across preceding weekdays, instead of weekend.
 - Codifies a confusing early voting schedule with variable weekday hours during the final week of early voting.

