



Dear Senators, Representatives and Governor DeWine:

Ohioans voted down Issue 1 of August, 2023 because they understood it was an attack on our access to the ballot. We reject SB 153 and HB 233 as part of the same illegitimate attempt by the legislature to wrest power from the people. We say no!

Our undersigned organizations stand united in opposition to the proposed attacks on the petition process that are part of Senate Bill 153 and House Bill 223. These companion bills would enact massive and deeply harmful barriers to the democratic process in Ohio, not just by making it harder for eligible citizens to vote, but by attacking our treasured right to direct democracy. These bills put targets on the backs of civically engaged Ohioans.

Here are a few of the ways SB153/HB233 would attack the initiative process:

- Requiring more signatures be thrown out when there are minor clerical errors or corrections
- Changing the rules so that new and updated voter registrations need to have been filed prior to the date the petition is signed rather than by the date the petition is filed
- Forcing volunteer circulators to waive their rights – potentially subjecting them to politically motivated investigations
- Requiring “compensated” circulators to wear badges, and defines “compensated” so broadly it even applies to volunteers who receive free pizza or a t-shirt at campaign events

In total, the changes put forward in SB153/HB233 would create an atmosphere of intimidation and threats that would cast a pall on Ohio’s tradition of direct democracy that has been so judiciously used since it was adopted over 110 years ago. The bills would also impose massive unfunded mandates on our already overworked Boards of Elections by making the petition review process more complicated and burdensome.

From candidates qualifying for the ballot and localities making zoning changes to statewide constitutional amendments, petition gathering has been a cornerstone of Ohio's democracy. We urge you to abandon this newest effort to undercut the citizen-led democratic process.

Our organizations stand firm in support of Ohioans rights to the ballot. We hope members of the General Assembly join us in supporting this right, and abandon SB 153 and HB 233.

Signed by the following organizations:

A. Philip Randolph Institute of Ohio	Gahanna Democrats and Friends
Abortion Forward	Grandview Ignite
ACLU OH	Green and Spiegel Midwest
AFSCME Ohio Council 8	Hamilton County Democratic Party
All on the Line	HEAL Ohio
All Voting is Local Action	Heartbeat Movement Inc
Black Environmental Leaders Association	Heartland Conference
Black Lives Matter Cleveland Inc.	Honesty for Ohio Education
Bold New Democracy	Ignite Peace
Cincinnati 50501	Indivisible Akron
Cleveland Jobs with Justice	Indivisible Central Ohio
Cleveland VOTES	Indivisible Central Ohio East
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Ohio	Indivisible Central Ohio subgroup -
Coffee. Compassion. Action!	Thursday Action Group
Columbus Community Bill of Rights	Indivisible Southwest OH
Columbus Community Rights Coalition, Inc	Ironworkers Local 207
Columbus Education Justice Coalition	Ironworkers Local 44
Common Cause Ohio	IRTF Cleveland
Communications Workers of America	Kent Environmental Council
District 4	LatinOHs
Communities United For Action	LEAD Ohio
Community Organizing Center	League of Women Voters Cincinnati Area
Crooked River Action	League of Women Voters of Bowling Green
Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus	League of Women Voters of Lorain County
Doctors Organized for Health Care	League of Women Voters of Metropolitan
Solutions	Columbus
EAGER Community LLC	League of Women Voters of Ohio
Equality Ohio	League of Women Voters of the Akron Area
Erase the Space	League of Women Voters of the Greater
Fair Districts Ohio	Dayton Area
Fairfield County Indivisible	League of Women Voters of Toledo/Lucas
Faith in Public Life	County
Firelands Indivisible	Libertarian Party of Ohio
Fostering Hope Ohio	LOVEboldly
Freedom BLOC	Medina County Democratic Party

Medina County Indivisible
Medina Democratic Club
Mill Creek Democracy Network
Mobilize the Vote NEO
Move to Amend Miami County, Ohio
National Association of Social Workers,
Ohio Chapter
North Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Northeast Ohio Voter Advocates
OAPSE
OCBCP Ohio Unity Coalition
OCSEA AFSCME Local 11
Ohio AFL-CIO
Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans
Educational Fund
Ohio Citizen Action
Ohio Coalition To End Qualified Immunity @
HeartbeatMovement Incorporated
Ohio Conference AAUP
Ohio Conference NAACP
Ohio Council of Churches
Ohio Education Association
Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund
Ohio Equal Rights
Ohio Fair Courts Alliance
Ohio Families Unite Against Police Brutality
Ohio Families Unite for Political Action and
Change
Ohio Federation of Teachers
Ohio NOW Education and Legal Fund
Ohio Nurses Association
Ohio Progressive Action Leaders
Ohio Sisters Justice Network
Ohio Unity Coalition (OCBCP)
Ohio Voter Fund
Ohio Voter Rights Coalition
Ohio Women's Alliance
Ohio Working Families Party
Ohioans Against Extremism
OPAWL - Building AAPI Feminist
Leadership
OPEIU Local 792
Orange Teachers Association
Organize! Ohio

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Ohio
Policy Matters Ohio
Positively Blue
ProgressNEO
Rank The Vote Ohio
Red Wine & Blue
ReSisters of Central Ohio
SEIU District 1199 WV/KY/OH
Sierra Club Ohio Chapter
Sisters of Mercy in Ohio
Southeast Progressives of Franklin County
St. John's UCC Columbus
Stonewall Democrats of Central Ohio
Summit County Progressive Democrats
Terrace Park Democratic Club
Terrace Park Democratic Club
Third Act Ohio
Thrive at Life: Working Solutions
TransOhio
UAW
UFCW Local 1059
UFCW Local 75
United Church of Christ
United Steelworkers-District 1
Upper Arlington Progressive Action
Ursuline Sisters of Cincinnati
Vegetarians of the Greater Youngstown
Area
Voting-Matters
We Are Ohio
Westerville Progressive Alliance
Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati