

April 30, 2019

Secretary of State Frank LaRose
180 E. Broad Street
16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Sent via USPS Certified mail to Secretary LaRose and via email to Sen. Manning, Sen. Sykes, and Rep. Sweeney

Re: Modernizing Voter Registration in Ohio

Dear Secretary LaRose,

Thank you for your leadership in creating a bipartisan committee of lawmakers to examine modernizing voter registration in Ohio.

The ACLU of Ohio is committed to making voting more accessible, secure, and fair for all Ohioans. We know making it easier to register to vote means more people will vote. Automatic voter registration has proven successful in expanding the voter rolls to make sure that every eligible voter has an opportunity to exercise their right to cast a ballot.

Registering voters, or updating their voter registration information, when they interact with a state agency is a common sense reform that has already been embraced by 15 states and the District of Columbia. This modernized process not only expands access to the ballot, but it's also more efficient – saving localities from processing more paper registrations.

As Ohio considers voter registration modernization, we want to stress the importance of ensuring any legislation:

- Receives input from voting rights advocates;
- Requires the person to be registered to swear that she meets voter eligibility requirements at the point of service;
- Is “opt out” rather than “opt in” – meaning that individuals are automatically registered but may opt out at the point of service, by returning a form or a similar process;
- Includes only individuals who interact with a government agency going forward*;
- Registers individuals who interact with any state agency, including and especially agencies that serve low-income people and people with disabilities;
- Includes provisions that do not punish ineligible voters who are inadvertently registered by the State; and
- Is fully accessible for voters with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

ACLU

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Ohio

4506 Chester Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103
P: (216) 472-2220
F: (216) 472-2210

1108 City Park Avenue
Suite 203
Columbus, OH 43206
P: (614) 586-1959
F: (614) 586-1974

acluohio.org
contact@acluohio.org

Jack Guttenberg
President


J. Bennett Guess
Executive Director

We look forward to working with you to make our election system accessible to more Ohioans. We encourage you and your staff to contact us with any questions about the above-listed reform measures.

Sincerely,



Jocelyn Rosnick, Esq.
Advocacy Director
[REDACTED]



Gary Daniels
Chief Lobbyist
[REDACTED]

CC: Senator Nathan Manning
Senator Vernon Sykes
Representative Bride Rose Sweeney

* We want to distinguish Ohio's lookback created by SOS Directive 2018-21, that was created to avert purges, under Ohio's Supplemental Process, of voters who have not changed residence. We do not intend this letter to be construed as an objection to that lookback, which is necessary under the current scheme to remedy inadvertent purges of voters who are already registered and in "active-confirmation" status.