

Under Senate #153 Sub-Bill (SB153):

Current Noncitizens on Ohio Voter Rolls Can Continue to Vote Indefinitely

Ohio does not verify U.S. citizenship before adding individuals to the voter rolls, and only a small fraction of the 7.8 million registered voters are ever reviewed for citizenship. Meanwhile, more than 305,000 noncitizens who obtained an Ohio driver's license or state ID were simultaneously prompted to register to vote unless they declined by not signing the form.

It's long past time to ensure that only U.S. citizens vote, as mandated by the Ohio Constitution. Every voter's U.S. citizenship must be confirmed before they are permitted to vote in another Ohio election.

Current Registrants without Verified Identity Can Continue to Vote Indefinitely

Ohio does not verify an applicant's identity before adding them to the voter rolls, as federal law requires. If identity cannot be confirmed, neither U.S. citizenship or legal age to vote can be confirmed; yet these individuals remain eligible to cast a regular ballot. In Cuyahoga County alone, 20,760 voters were recently identified with unverifiable identity data, and 1,600 of them cast ballots in the November 2024 election.

SB153 Sub-Bill requires *new* registrants with unverifiable identities to vote provisionally until verified, but imposes no such requirement on *existing* registrants, who remain fully qualified voters unless they change their name or address.

This structure undermines the Ohio Constitution's prohibition on noncitizen and underage voting by allowing individuals with unverifiable identity – and no proof of U.S. citizenship or legal age – to vote. It also conflicts with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which requires identity verification *before* adding applicants to the voter rolls.

Copies of Proof of Citizenship Documents Are Accepted Without Verification

Boards of Elections officials - including temporary poll workers - are expected to visually inspect and accept copies of proof-of-citizenship documents without any ability to verify their authenticity through official databases or agencies.

SB153 Sub-Bill treats unverified copies as proof of citizenship, relying on self-asserted claims rather than validated records. Accepting copies without independent verification fails to meet Ohio's constitutional requirement that only U.S. citizens may vote.

Delayed Citizenship Provisions Allows Noncitizens to Vote in Upcoming Elections:

SB153 Sub-Bill delays citizenship verification for 18 months to update voter registration systems statewide. With only four vendors serving all 88 counties, adding a few data fields should not require an extended delay.

Ohio voters approved a 2022 constitutional amendment limiting voting to *only* U.S. citizens, yet nine elections have since occurred without ensuring that only citizens vote. The proposed delay would extend this gap through at least three more elections, allowing noncitizens to continue registering and voting.

Federal law already authorizes the Secretary of State to verify citizenship using Bureau of Motor Vehicle data and DHS's SAVE program, which now supports bulk processing. However, the Secretary of State has not clarified whether any statewide verification is being conducted. Although 1,084 noncitizens - including 167 who voted – were recently referred for possible federal prosecution, Ohioans still lack transparency on whether broader verification efforts are taking place beyond the narrow annual reviews required under current law.