

Summary HB472 - Ohio Votes Count Act

Big Picture Issues

- Election officials are not computer specialists, but elections **rely heavily** on computer technology.
- Even when known to be ineligible, a voter registration generally requires **4 or more years** to be removed.
- Voting systems are built and certified to **outdated 2005** security standards.
- Ohio elections lack safeguards to prevent **267,000+ non-citizens** from registering and voting.

Voter Registration Data Validation

ISSUES: State and county voter registration systems contain numerous avoidable data entry errors.

SOLUTIONS:

- Use reference lists of names and addresses to verify new and existing voter registration records.
- Issue weekly reports to counties identifying various errors in their voter registration databases.
- Before adding an applicant to the voter registration database, require the voter registration to match the information on the applicant's driver's license or state id card.
- Cancel voter registrations for electors who have moved if they are registered to vote or have applied for a driver's license in another state.
- Simplify the system for assigning unique record identifiers in the statewide voter registration database.
- Use a commercial service for monthly voter registration data analysis.

Audit Voter Registration Databases

ISSUES: The current audit is not independent or thorough.

SOLUTIONS:

- Require the Auditor of State to conduct an annual audit of the statewide voter registration database and three randomly selected counties.

Identity and Citizenship Verification

ISSUES: There are insufficient safeguards to prevent non-citizens and ineligible persons from registering and voting.

SOLUTIONS:

- Increase the frequency of review for non-citizens and other ineligible voters.
- Provide counties with resources to verify identity and citizenship prior to registration and for absentee and provisional ballot screening.
- Expand voter registration instructions to include citizenship and other eligibility requirements.
- Introduce safeguards and procedures at social services, BMV and registration agencies to ensure noncitizens are not misled into illegally registering to vote.
- Require an elector to vote a provisional ballot until US citizenship is verified.

Board of Voting System Examiners

ISSUES: The Board lacks cybersecurity expertise and certification standards for voter registration systems.

SOLUTIONS:

- Include cybersecurity experts on the board of voting system examiners.
- Establish standards and require certification of new voter registration systems.
- Cybersecurity review is necessary to certify a new voting system.
- Require publication of voting system certification reports and recommendations.
- Require voter registration systems to be physically located in Ohio in a facility under the board of elections control.

Cybersecurity Standards

ISSUES: Election systems security standards are outdated.

SOLUTIONS:

- Use 3rd party reviewers to conduct a cyber security assessment of voting systems seeking certification.
- Adopt voting system certification standards based on most recent NIST and current federal guidelines.
- Require a periodic review and voting system vendor disclosure of software development practices as part of a continued certification security review.
- Require use of a digital blockchain ledger to log all voter registration system changes.

County Voting System Backup

ISSUES: No contingencies exist if a voting system is decertified.

SOLUTIONS:

- Authorize a county opt-in provision for hand counted paper ballots through passage of an electorate introduced ballot petition initiative.

Election Administration

- Requires most persons to register to vote using an Ohio driver's license or state identification card number.
- Requires most voters to include a copy of their voter identification when returning a mail-in ballot.
- Requires a provisional ballot to be counted when both a provisional and mail-in ballot are cast.
- Requires an elector to sign a form when updating their voter registration.
- Requires online publishing of voter/election reports.