

14th House District

·Cuyahoga County·
·Brooklyn·
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·Middleburg Heights·
·Parma Heights·

133rd General Assembly

·Finance·
·Higher Education Subcommittee-Ranking·
·Insurance·
·Commerce, Labor, and Technology·

Bride Rose Sweeney

State Representative

July 29, 2019

Dear Secretary LaRose,

Thank you for your previous and ongoing partnership concerning elections in Ohio. I am writing you today to express some concerns that have arisen for my constituents in Cuyahoga County and for voters across Ohio.

It has come to my attention that you have recently ordered Ohio's county boards of elections to resume the antiquated practice of the voter purge. This procedure, litigated last summer in the United States Supreme Court, was ruled to be permitted but is not required nor is it necessary to preserve the integrity of Ohio's elections. In fact, this process instead removes thousands of eligible voters from the rolls and infringes upon one of our most sacred rights, the right to vote.

Indeed, in your March directive to the counties, you did not include the purge of infrequent voters. You included only the National Change of Address process spelled out in state law. Can you explain why you have ordered the purge of some infrequent voters in your June directive but you did not include such a purge in your directive in March of this year?

Ohio has Portable Voter Registration, meaning if someone is registered and lives in Ohio, they remain eligible to vote in Ohio. This purge will sweep up eligible Ohio voters who are properly registered and still live in this state today. What steps are being taken to ensure eligible voters will remain on the rolls?

This voter purge is scheduled to take place on September 6, just days before many counties' September 10 primary elections. The voter registration deadline will have passed and purged voters will not be able to vote in this election. Will those voters' ballots count if they are purged just 4 days before the election?

The announcement of this purge was a surprise and I'm concerned that mailed government notices are not a good way to reach this group of voters. Community groups also may not have enough time or resources to contact people to warn them of the purge.

These are just a few of the concerns that my constituents and voters across Ohio have been voicing to my office. In my home county of Cuyahoga, 28,000 people are on the list to be purged for infrequent voting.

Mr. Secretary, when we stood together three months ago to announce our bipartisan effort to bring Automated Voter Registration to Ohio, I was excited to work on inclusion of all eligible

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Ohio voters in our democracy. For years, we've had Automated Voter Purging but not Automated Voter Registration. I was surprised then, on June 26, when you ordered the county boards of elections to start the Ohio voter purge back up again.

I ask that you reconsider and cancel this voter purge so that my constituents – those who vote and those who don't – are not struck from the rolls. Let's get back on track with Automated Voter Registration and leave Automated Voter Purging in the past.

Mr. Secretary, let's continue to work together to make Ohio's elections more convenient, safe, and secure for every voter and be an example for the rest of the nation. Let's not fall back into divisive and harmful practices of the past.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All the best,



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