



February 20, 2014

The Honorable John Kasich  
Office of the Governor  
30th Floor 77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Dear Governor Kasich,

On behalf of Project Vote, I write to urge your veto of two recently passed election-related bills, Senate Bills 205 and 238. Project Vote is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that works to empower, educate, and mobilize low-income, minority, youth, and other marginalized and under-represented voters.

Because of our organizational commitment to making registration, voting, and casting a vote that counts available to all eligible Americans, Project Vote is deeply concerned about the probable impact of these Ohio bills. Senate Bill 238 will change current law by reducing the number of days available for Ohioans to participate in the democratic process and exercise their right to vote. The bill will eliminate Ohio's unique "Golden Week," which enables a new registrant to vote at the time of registration, subject, of course, to the later examination of the application by the election authorities to ensure the voter's eligibility. Its legislative proponents claim that eliminating this additional time will curtail voter fraud. This claim doesn't hold water, as the facts show that approximately 0.002 percent of votes were "fraudulently" cast in the 2012 General Election in Ohio. Of those cases, most are dropped at the local Board of Elections level as simple mistakes or voter confusion.

Senate Bill 205 will also severely limit voting opportunities for the eligible electorate by prohibiting counties from sending all registered voters absentee ballot applications. Further, this legislation will make it likely that many votes will be rejected because it prohibits election officials from helping voters complete any portion of an absentee ballot application, ID envelope, or absentee ballot, despite federal statutory guarantees to voters in need of assistance that assistance will be provided at the polling place.

Secretary of State Jon Husted, Ohio's chief election official, has himself cast doubt on these bills' likely impact on their stated purpose, to combat voter fraud—which has been shown conclusively to be an illusory problem in Ohio.

For much of American history, women, minorities, and other traditionally disenfranchised groups have fought for the right to equally participate in American civic

life. Senate Bills 205 and 238 are taking Ohio in the wrong direction. But you, Governor Kasich, can stand up for voters and for democracy by vetoing these dangerous bills. We hope we can count on your support and that you will veto both SB 205 and SB 238 when they reach your desk.

Sincerely,

Estelle H. Rogers Esq.  
Legislative Director  
Project Vote