



## **DROP BOXES COMING TO ALL COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER IN A GENERAL ELECTION**

On August 12th, Secretary of State Frank LaRose announced that Boards of Elections must continue to utilize a drop box at the boards' office, but that the law does not permit the placement of drop boxes elsewhere.

### **Some quick facts:**

- Six months ago, there were only a scattered few drop boxes in select Ohio county boards of elections, and they weren't always available. Today there are 88, and beginning Sept. 1 they will be available 24/7. They can be used for the return of ballots AND the return of absentee ballot requests.
- Secretary LaRose wants counties to be able to place drop boxes throughout the county. [The law doesn't allow it.](#)
- The risk to voter confusion is much greater if he permitted counties to place drop boxes around the county outside of the state law, and then was subject to a law suit which ordered them removed, versus if he sticks to the law now, even if a court may later order that boards can place them elsewhere. It would be far more damaging to voter confidence if something was made available and then constricted.
- **Secretary LaRose**, as pointed out by Slate legal writer Mark Joseph Stern "**deserves credit for reading the law expansively enough to preserve (existing) drop boxes.**" [https://twitter.com/mjs\\_dc/status/1293642072025714689?s=21](https://twitter.com/mjs_dc/status/1293642072025714689?s=21)
- Prior to the primary this year, when HB 197 directed boards of elections to place drop boxes at the board office, the legislature had never before authorized drop boxes at all. Because HB 197 was temporary law, Secretary LaRose's order to require drop boxes this fall is actually an expansion of opportunities for voters.

The chairman of the Ohio Democratic Party has made the argument that Secretary LaRose can basically do whatever he wants regardless of existing state law. For instance, it's very clear in state law that the expenditure of federal funds requires controlling board (a legislative body) approval. Yet, the Chairman misleads the public by saying Secretary LaRose can use federal money to pay for the postage on ballots without legislative approval. Additionally, the Ohio Democratic Party is suing Secretary LaRose to remove safeguards in place on Ohio's vote by mail system that makes it a secure and accessible option for every voter.

- With a little more than a month before voting begins, it should come as no surprise that political parties and operatives on both sides are doing whatever they can to help their preferred candidate win.
- Meanwhile, Secretary LaRose is blocking out the noise and carrying out his mission to provide accessibility and predictability to county elections officials and voters and **following the law** - even when he doesn't agree with the law - because that's the oath he swore to uphold.

#### **Here's the reality:**

- **93% of Ohioans say that it is easy to register and vote in the Buckeye State.**  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vbmv7EXnwqeubTuvBYNiBvq565sOxi\\_9/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Vbmv7EXnwqeubTuvBYNiBvq565sOxi_9/view)
- Ohio has 28 days of early voting. The national average is 19 days.
- Ohio's 216 hours of early voting is more than 43 other states.
- Every eligible voter in Ohio will receive an absentee ballot request form in the mail beginning around Labor Day.

When one side says vote by mail will lead to fraud, it makes it less likely that their supporters will avail themselves of that safe and secure voting option.

When the other side says it's too hard to vote without placing drop boxes all around the county (though they have never existed before in every county during a general election), they're making it less likely that voters will avail themselves of the four weeks of early in-person voting, absentee voting by mail, and in-person Election Day voting that Ohioans have.

We should all be doing everything we can to share factual, truthful information with voters and encouraging them to make their voice heard.