



*The OEA will lead the way for continuous improvement of public education while advocating for members and the learners they serve.*

**Wednesday, June 3, 2020**  
**House Bill 680 Testimony**  
**House State and Local Government Committee**

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jeff Wensing. I am a high school math teacher with 26 years of experience and I currently serve as Vice President of the Ohio Education Association. On behalf of our 122,000 members, thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns with House Bill 680.

Each year, OEA members adopt legislative policies to address issues facing public education and the state as a whole. Through these legislative policies, our members have consistently supported ensuring that we have free and open elections and making sure Ohio's citizens have unencumbered access to participate in our democracy.

I appreciate that the committee earlier adopted changes to the bill that addressed some areas of opposition in my original testimony. However, OEA continues to recommend that lawmakers should be seeking ways to make it easier to vote.

Secretary of State LaRose has recommended allowing voters to request absentee ballots online and to have fully paid postage on absentee ballot requests and the ballots themselves. These requests would make the process of absentee voting easier and more accessible for Ohio's citizens. OEA supports these recommendations and believes they should be incorporated into HB 680.

As we face uncertain times and a continuing public health crisis, it is vitally important that Ohioans have confidence in our elections. All citizens should be able to exercise their right to vote in ways that are safe and convenient. As amended, HB 680 represents a missed opportunity to take steps that would make absentee voting more accessible.

Thank you Chairman Wiggam. I've available for questions from the committee.

