



Summary of Bills that Restrict Voting Rights and Harm Elections

Michigan state legislators have introduced 39 bills that restrict citizens' voting rights, harm election administration and demonstrate a lack of knowledge of existing election procedure and law. They are summarized below.

BILLS TO RESTRICT VOTING RIGHTS

- **SB 273** Enables county canvassers or the Secretary of State to remove or prohibit drop boxes if they don't meet unnecessarily restrictive, unrealistic, and unfunded security protocols.
- **SB 285** Limits voting by mail to those fortunate enough to own or have access to a copy machine, as it requires a photocopy of ID to be included with mailed absentee applications. In-person requests would require showing ID.
- **SB 286** Bans use of drop boxes on Election Day, when they are most needed. (Ban starts at 5 p.m. the night before.)
- **SB 287** Bans prepaid postage on absentee ballot return envelopes.
- **SB 302** Requires voters to attest they are not registered or legally residing out of state, even though both could be true and they would still have the right to register in Michigan, which would result in their older registration getting cancelled. (Current law also already prohibits double voting.)
- **SB 303 & 304** Ban the use of a sworn affidavit if a voter arrives at their polling place without ID. Those voters would be required to vote a provisional ballot, which would not be counted unless the voter provides more documentation than is currently required by law.
- **SB 308** Requires overly specific and restrictive signature verification rules.
- **SB 309** Gives challengers stronger protections than poll workers in order to lengthen voting lines and enable more improper challenges that could disenfranchise eligible voters.
- **SB 310** Prohibits the Secretary of State from sending unsolicited absentee ballot applications or directly linking to the application on the Department of State website.
- **SB 311** Only allows military overseas, and not their dependents, to return ballots electronically using their Common Access Card, which servicemembers say is notoriously unreliable, and the Department of Defense has not agreed to make available for voting.

BILLS TO HARM ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

- **SB 279** Allows two challengers per party for every for 2,999 ballots at an absentee ballot counting board, and one additional challenger per party for each additional 2,999 ballots. But total ballot count is unknown prior to counting, and this volume of challengers could be unmanageable.
- **SB 280** Limits to 100 days the canvassing of initiative petitions, with no exceptions, but provides no funding for additional Bureau of Elections staff needed to accomplish this.
- **SB 282** Bans staff of the state's own technology department from accessing the state voter registration database, despite the fact that they built it and maintain its security. Also bans clerk staffs from accessing the database, while granting new access to staff from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, who do not need access. Attempts to ban something that does not currently happen, based on disinformation that civic groups like Rock the Vote had direct access to the database, which they did not.
- **SB 283** Provides only 10 hours for pre-processing absentee ballots even though that proved insufficient and the national best practice is seven days. This will not prevent delayed results that enable the misinformation that harms voter trust in elections.
- **SB 284** Bans local election jurisdictions from accepting non-government grants of all kinds, despite failure of the state to fund elections.
- **SB 289** Enables state legislators to appropriate or withhold federal election funds, despite failure of the state to fund elections.
- **SB 290 and 291** Ban nonpartisan challengers and allow all candidates to appoint challengers. Remove felony penalty for those appointed based on false statements.
- **SB 292 and 293** Require challenger training, but without penalties for noncompliance. Also ban nonpartisan challengers, who play an important role in ensuring election integrity.
- **SB 294** Requires ratio of partisan election inspectors in each community not be more than 2:1, an unnecessarily strict requirement, rather than requiring political parties to submit names or clerks to notify parties of availability. (Depending on the local population, many jurisdictions have trouble finding challengers from one party or the other.)
- **SB 295** Requires training election workers to match tabulator counts to voter counts hourly, which will not work if a tabulator jams or in other circumstances where the tabulator count is not up-to-date in real time (and is why the unofficial election night count is on the paper tally, not the tabulator screen).
- **SB 296** Increases the chances a canvassing board will fail to certify, by enlarging them and requiring a supermajority to certify.
- **SB 297** Requires a canvasser from each party present during county canvass with no enforcement mechanism to ensure that canvassers actually show up, enabling canvassers to stop or veto a canvass by not attending. Also gives canvassers improper authority to approve or deny county clerk staff selected to assist the canvass.

BILLS TO HARM ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

- **SB 299** Requires vote counting to stop and results to be reported by noon the day after the election, creating a legal impossibility for clerks who have no authority under law not to count all valid ballots, and despite the fact that clerks currently have no incentive not to count efficiently.
- **SB 305** Bans name or likeness of an elected or appointed official on any election-related communication, which would require rewriting numerous forms and documents in likely every jurisdiction in the state, and reduce confidence in officially produced voter education.
- **SB 307** Requires full text of ballot initiatives to be included with ballots, but does not provide funding for significant additional printing costs.

SIGNIFICANTLY FLAWED BILLS

- **SB 274** Allows pre-registration at 16 years old, but only at a Secretary of State office instead of allowing youths all registration methods available to other citizens.
- **SB 275 and 276** Allow video recording of audits (which is already allowed) and absentee ballot counting boards (which would violate voter privacy when a ballot is found to have been submitted without a secrecy sleeve) and require the Bureau of Elections to host those videos online without providing funding to do so.
- **SB 277** Requires deceased voter registration cancellation but without clear matching criteria and protections against wrongful removal.
- **SB 278** Redundantly requires sealed ballot envelopes to be placed in sealed ballot containers.
- **SB 281** Requires the voter registration database to be updated based on multistate records, which is already done, and to post numbers of registrations cancelled for these reasons, which is not funded and already available by FOIA.
- **SB 288** Requires the Bureau of Elections to record and livestream precinct-level audits with election inspectors from both parties present, despite the fact that audits are already open to the public and no funding is provided for video recording and streaming.
- **SB 298** Extends county canvass from 14 to 21 days but does not enable state canvassers to continue to meet six days after county canvasses are completed.
- **SB 300 and 301** Establishes early voting only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the second Saturday before Election Day, rather than when most needed closer to Election Day, and on multiple weekdays and weekend days and across daytime and evening hours to support the schedules of all voters.
- **SB 306** Requires the Secretary of State to post names of clerks not current on required training, but at a time when newly elected clerks are just taking office.