



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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

May 8, 2023

The Honorable Jason Stephens
77 S. High St., 14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Speaker Stephens:

On behalf of the 120,000 members of the Ohio Education Association, this letter is to reiterate OEA's opposition to the proposed resolution that would weaken the voice of Ohio voters, Senate Joint Resolution 2 (SJR 2). Majority rule is a basic principle of our democracy. SJR 2 would make it much more challenging to pass citizen-led initiatives – requiring 60% of the vote rather than a simple majority to amend the Constitution.

For over 100 years, Ohioans could amend the Constitution through a citizen-led initiative. Utilizing direct democracy in this manner allows Ohio voters to address critical issues when the legislature is either unable or unwilling to do so.

Additionally, SJR 2 would make the arduous process of bringing a citizen-led initiative to the ballot even more difficult. The resolution would require gathering signatures of at least 5% of electors in every county instead of from 44 counties. The amendment would also eliminate the ten-day cure period to gather additional signatures.

In December of 2022, more than 600 delegates to the OEA Representative Assembly passed a new business item in opposition to House Joint Resolution 6. OEA is among a large, diverse, and continually growing list of organizations that have expressed opposition to this proposal.

Further, I would like to express OEA's opposition to Senate Bill 92 or other attempts to rush this proposal to the ballot via an August special election. The argument during the previous General Assembly to eliminate August special elections was that these elections have low voter turnout. Now, there seems to be a stunning reversal and a desire to hold an August election where the outcome could be a lasting alteration to the rights of all Ohioans.

Again, I urge a "no" vote on SJR 2 and attempts to rush it to the ballot. Given the importance of this issue, these will be scorecard votes for OEA. The voters of Ohio should be our ultimate decision-makers. Our elected officials need to listen when the majority speaks at the ballot box.

Sincerely,

Scott DiMauro
OEA President

CC: Members of the Ohio House of Representatives

