

To: Secretary of State Frank LaRose
From: All Voting is Local
Date: August 13, 2020

Re: Expanded Data Collection and Policy Reform

Dear Secretary LaRose:

On July 21, 2021, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition sent a [letter](#) to your office to discuss a number of data issues concerning past and future elections. We received a response from Director of Elections, Amanda Grandjean, on August 6 saying, your office does not have the requested election data because Ohio is a bottom-up and decentralized state and instead, advised our organizations to seek information from the state's 88 local county boards of election. While we appreciate the response, we believe that data collection and reporting must be mandated by your office and uniform across Ohio's counties. Therefore, we are requesting to meet you and your team directly to share the various data needs that could be mandated from the state, in order to yield best practices statewide.

Again, our goal is to expand elections-related data collection across the state so the election process continues to improve in a comprehensive manner that values every voter's right to cast a ballot, bolsters public confidence in our electoral system, illuminates best practices that other Boards of Elections can emulate, and provides data needed for best guiding policy reforms. Every successful business embarks on robust data collection to guide sound decisions and improvements. Boards of Elections should indeed do the same.

If the data collection is not required, counties are likely to opt to spend their resources elsewhere. However, if uniform data collection and reporting become a mandate from the state with a timeline for completion, counties can factor the requirements into upcoming system updates and have a timeframe by which completion is possible.

A couple of examples on how uniform data collection and reporting could have a positive impact for voters and elections officials follow. Our research shows that provisional ballot usage is high, but so too are the cure rates. Having data on why a person is given a provisional ballot to cast helps ensure that poll workers are trained well, that we can all collectively improve voter education. Additionally, across the state, there are no clear and consistent methods by which counties are uniformly collecting data for analyzing the efficacy of or making improvements to jail voting. In fact, our largest counties don't even have any policies or procedures in place. If there is no accurate data, we cannot collectively figure out where the holes are in the system.

Systemic issues often manifest in the most marginalized communities. The lack of clear tracking policies and procedures hamper a smooth and uniform implementation of voting for those who are in the custody of the county's criminal legal system. This is just one example of one of the many issues that could be improved if counties were required to expand their data collection and reporting.

We believe that you, Secretary LaRose, should shepherd the process and direct counties to implement a more comprehensive data collection system. Our policy recommendations are based on data and best practices, and good data leads to good policy.

Thank you for your time and attention to these matters. Please let us know when you could meet with us by contacting Kayla Griffin at kayla@allvotingislocal.org.

Sincerely,

Kayla Griffin, All Voting is Local Ohio
Mia Lewis, Common Cause Ohio
Camille Wimbish, Ohio Voice
Jen Miller, League of Women Voters Ohio