

June 8 th , 2023 House Elections Cmte hearing PIME testimony on HB4697, 4698, 4699, & 4702

My name is Sheree Ritchie, and I am a born and raised Michigander. I am here to speak on behalf of PIME (Pure Integrity Michigan Elections) regarding House Bills 4697, 4698, 4699, and 4702. This statement from PIME comes with the support of Michigan Fair Elections (MFE), Stand Up Michigan, and the Freedom Alliance Project, altogether representing over 500,000 Michigan voters and growing. PIME is an issue-based, nonpartisan movement that supports election integrity, and the US and Michigan Constitutions.

PIME opposes HB4697 as written for the following reasons:

1. We understand that Proposal 2 calls for one ballot drop box for each municipality and for every 15,000 voters for municipalities. But we believe that providing more drop boxes than this would add further cost to the taxpayers and only raise more concerns about voter fraud and fraudulent ballots.
2. Ballot drop boxes should NOT be equipped with mail-box style levers. There is no reason for this since ballot harvesting is not allowed in Michigan. All ballot drop boxes should be equipped with a slot no larger than necessary to accept a single ballot.
3. Why is the video monitoring requirement struck and the word "may" used to ensure effective monitoring of drop boxes? Video monitoring should absolutely be required in order to instill voter confidence in our elections. Furthermore, PIME believes that livestream of video surveillance should be made available for public viewing. This would also bolster confidence in the election process.
4. Section 761.d(14)(b), why is "The total number of absent voter ballot return envelopes collected from the absent voter ballot drop box" struck from the requirements list of what the clerk must keep records on? This should be reinstated, to make voters confident in the election process and absentee ballot submission.

PIME opposes HB4698 as written for the following reason:

1. Introducing the "educational institution" definition to include any accrediting institution lowers the standard for ID requirements. 72% of Michigan voters support voter ID laws. Section (g) should be removed and the old section k(ix) should be unstruck. (See link below for source.)

a. <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/michigan-voters-support-voter-id-58-percent-black-voters>

PIME opposes HB4699 as written for the following reasons:

1. Section 759g is too vague and again puts too much authority in control of a partisan office, that of the SOS. Specifics should be laid out in the bill, like how and when the discontinuation list will be managed and when the discontinuation happens, i.e. deadline/time limit.
2. PIME feels that 6 years is too long, given that to continue to send absentee ballots to someone who may not have ever returned an absentee ballot in this time period (this is in sec 759.3.d). We would suggest not more than 2 years (roughly 6 elections), in order to verify that absentee ballots have actually been used by the voter, then offer extension or renewal. The potential of having unused ballots floating around in the public for years does not promote confidence in election results, as well as being a waste of taxpayer dollars to continue to mail these ballots to someone who has decided to stop voting, or ends up voting in person, etc..

PIME opposes HB4702 as written for the following reasons:

1. Precinct size might be increased to not more than 4000 registered voters, rather than 5000. If you've ever worked an election, you know that if you actually had to process even 2999 voters in person, the line would be out the door all day long. There is no reason to increase the precinct size to more than 4,000 as this only has the potential to over-stress election workers who we know are already in short supply. We understand that condensing the number of precincts may reduce expenditures on tabulator machines, etc., of which we approve.

2. Is there some reason the oversight on the number of voting machines is being removed? Does this have the potential to create longer lines at the polls and introduce

PIME appreciates being able to exercise our right to participate and be heard in the legislative process. We urge lawmakers to dutifully and thoughtfully consider what is proposed here and amend these bills for the reasons given. .

Thank you for your time.

Sheree Ritchie, PIME Legislative Cmte