



PRESS RELEASE

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CIVIC INFLUENCERS JOINS LAWSUIT TO SUE OHIO'S SECRETARY OF STATE OVER NEW YOUTH SUPPRESSION LAW

COLUMBUS, OH — [Civic Influencers](https://www.civicinfluencers.org) today announced that it has joined a lawsuit over Ohio's new voter suppression law for restricting the ability of young people and other Buckeyes to cast their ballots. Other plaintiffs in the suit, filed by Elias Law Group, include the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless, Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans, and Union Veterans Council.

CEO Maxim Thorne said, "This law is the latest attack on youth voting rights in Ohio. Ohio has become the Frankenstein laboratory for youth voter suppression. We believe we must fight back these voter suppression laws - like this one signed the very first week of January 2023 - to prevent the spread of these diseased laws across the country, threatening our democracy and young people's voting rights."

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 458 on January 6, 2023. Its new restrictions on the voting process include limiting the types of accepted voter ID to just four types of documents; moving up the deadline for voters to "cure" their ballots; shortening the deadlines for voters to request and return their mail-in ballots; limiting counties to just a single drop-box no matter their size or population; and eliminating early voting the Monday before Election Day.

Civic Influencers views this law as an attempt to create more obstacles for Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, Disabled and Youth of Color (BIHDYoC) in the voting process. If allowed to go into effect, each of these new provisions will make it more difficult - if not impossible - for BIHDYoC in Ohio to cast votes and have those votes counted.

Civic Influencers has been organizing young people to vote in Ohio since 2008. More recently we are focused on **community colleges and trade, technical and vocational schools** who are likely to be most impacted. As our boots on campus at University of Cincinnati Civic Influencer Cooper Smith said, "We need as few barriers as possible to make sure everyone participates in our already secure elections, these new restrictions add further hurdles to what can already be a stressful voting period for young Americans and first-time voters."

Founded in 2008, [Civic Influencers](https://www.civicinfluencers.org) is a national, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to increase youth civic power and youth voting, giving emphasis to Black, Indigenous and Youth of Color. Using novel data collection and rigorous analysis, Civic Influencers targets its work to states, districts, and campuses where young people have the power to determine election outcomes. We then hire and train young organizers to empower their peers in the voting process, including by engaging in advocacy where necessary to create election processes that are accessible, with an emphasis on the concerns of BIHDYoC.

For all media inquiries, contact **Rachael Gambino**, Chief of Staff, at rachaelgambino@civicinfluencers.org.