



Applied Information Resources Newsletter
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Applied Information Resources is a non-profit, public policy research and community information organization dedicated to:

- Citizen education on public issues.
- Assisting human service organizations in evaluating their programs, and
- Providing the best possible information to decision makers responding to changing human and urban needs.

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Protecting The Vote This October and November 3rd

by Bill Woods

This year's election is often described as "the most important election of our time." It will take place in the midst of a pandemic that has already caused the death of over 200,000 people in the US. This health crisis has led millions of citizens to want to vote by mail, and this trend creates numerous complications from state to state.

Meanwhile, the President keeps ranting that such voting will lead to major fraud and a "rigged election," and numerous lawsuits are currently challenging state procedures aimed at making voting by mail safe and uncomplicated. Changes at the U.S. Post Office have also created potential problems. Further, in an extremely politically polarized nation, daily doses of misinformation about voting confront confused users of social media and other information outlets.

Faced with so many com-

plications and such chaos, average citizens need some reliable assistance and information to give them assurance that they can vote and that their votes will count. Here in Ohio, a coalition of non-partisan citizen-based organizations are working together to do just that. Common Cause Ohio, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition, and the League of Women Voters of Ohio are three such groups.



The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition and Common Cause Ohio work together to field trained grassroots teams to perform a variety of services con-

nected with insuring voting rights, providing reliable information to confused potential voters, and insuring a safe and fair election process. They are currently recruiting volunteers throughout the state to take on these various election protection tasks. At the moment, the emphasis is on supplying accurate information to voters on how to obtain, fill out, and return absentee ballots.

One group of volunteers will be responsible for spreading information in their communities about registration, absentee voting, early voting and the various procedures and regulations that can often stymie voters. These volunteers will especially let people know about the Voter Hot Line that will be available should they have any questions or problems.

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A second group of volunteers will be trained to monitor social media. On the lookout for misinformation about voting, they will report any efforts through emails, Face Book, and Twitter to confuse or discourage would be voters. Once reported, the lead organizers will take steps to discredit this misinformation and Inform the public about it.

A third critical role for volunteers will be serving as Poll Monitors. On Election Day, these folks will moni-

tor the polls for problems such as long lines or efforts to intimidate or discourage voters. They will also pass out cards at the polls that provide the Hot Line number and list voting regulations and potential issues. Since early voting in Ohio begins on October 6th, these volunteers will also monitor Boards of Election or any other sites designated for early voting.

Finally, volunteers will be trained to answer the Hot Line number in their area. Although citizens will be able to call concerning all types of

voting concerns, calls related to voting regulations that come in during the early voting period or on Election Day will be handled by volunteers with some legal experience and

knowledge about election laws.

As previously stated, you can become a volunteer for one of these described services by contacting Common Cause Ohio or the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition.

Go to [Protect the Vote.Com](http://ProtecttheVote.Com) or call (614) 285-6019.

Money in Politics: What's the Problem?

At the State House in Columbus, a proposed campaign donation disclosure law receives consideration by the Ohio Senate. In the wake of the recent "dark money" scandal involving House Speaker Larry Householder, the Ohio General Assembly has been prodded by reform groups to take some actions to stop this kind of major misuse of campaign donations designed to buy legislation. Senate Bill 347 is one result of this advocacy for reform.

If passed, Senate Bill 347 would require special interest groups producing political ads to publicly identify their largest donors. Without this kind of basic disclosure of major donors, citizens of Ohio cannot really tell what powerful interests or wealthy individuals are financing these ad campaigns. These groups too often have innocuous names such as Citizens For a Better World that make it impossible to link them to special interests or Fat Cats.

Catherine Turcer, Executive Director of Common Cause Ohio, recently testified before the Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee in favor of S.B. 347. In her testimony, she noted: "We are now experiencing the consequences of not having adequate disclosure. I urge you to pass Senate Bill 347 and shine a light on the funding of political advertisements."

Turcer also proposed three amendments that would greatly strengthen this bill. She pointed out that the proposal needed to more adequately disclose the initial funding sponsors of an ad campaign in order for the public to know who launched it. Secondly, she advocated that the bill require the political ads that people see on TV or read in the

mail list the top three ad-campaign donors. Finally, she suggested an amendment that would prohibit individual candidates for public office from helping in any way to raise funds for independent political ad campaigns.

Such amendments would more fully disclose the "big money" behind these independent political or public policy ad campaigns. In a telephone conversation with Turcer, she noted that no further action on Senate Bill 347 is

likely until the lame duck session of the General Assembly after the November 3rd election. "This would be a good time to call or write your State Senator or Ohio House Representative. Tell them," she concluded, "to vote for S.B. 347 with my three suggested amendments."



CONTRIBUTIONS HELP AIR, INC. WITH COMMUNITY WORK

AIR depends on individual contributions to support our work. We are a charitable 501(c) (3) organization and your contributions help fund such projects as campaign finance reform, political reform and studies in racism and community organizing in Cincinnati. We invite you to assist us as AIR takes on community issues and challenges.

- \$1000
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Make your tax-deductible checks **payable to: AIR, Inc.** and send to:

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You can now donate online at www.airinc.org

Community Issues Forums Resume via Zoom

Community Issues Forums have resumed! Of course like everyone else, we are using zoom technology. We have been holding these since May.

Some of our speakers have been Josh Spring on the people who are homeless during the pandemic, Jan Michele Lemon Kearney on the city demonstrations, David Mann on the city budget, and Dave Altman on the environmental issues.

We are continuing this fall with election candidates and issues



Upcoming Forums:

Thursday, October 15-Election Focus:
 City Prosecutors-Joseph Deters, Fanon Rucker

Thursday, October 29-Election Focus:
 TBD

Voting Information

There Are Three Options To Vote In An Election

1. Early In-Person At Your Local Board Of Elections
2. Absentee By Mail (Vote By Mail)
3. At Your Assigned Poll Location On Election Day, November 3rd



Early Voting Opens: October 6th

Early Vote Location:

Hamilton County Board Of Elections
4700 Smith Rd
Norwood, Ohio 45212
513-632-7000



Early Voting Ends: November 2nd

Voting Hours For In Person Voting At The Board Of Elections

- October 6-16th Monday – Friday 8-5 Pm
- October 19-23rd Monday – Friday 8-6 Pm
- October 24th Saturday 8-4 Pm
- October 25th Sunday 1-5 Pm
- October 26-30th Monday – Friday 8-7 Pm
- October 31st Saturday 8-4 Pm
- November 1st Sunday 1-5 Pm
- November 2nd Monday 8-2 Pm (Last Day For In Person Voting)