

## Politics Notebook: Democrats Push Early Voting; Issue 3 Criticisms Rebutted; Poll Finds Ohioans Leery of 'Occupy,' Tea Party Movements

October 27, 2011

House Democrats took to county election boards in four major cities Thursday to press the flesh and call for voters to take advantage of the early absentee ballot period while they are able.

Sprinkling prepared comments with criticisms over [Secretary of State Jon Husted's](#) order and a related law that ends early voting the Friday before the election, the lawmakers said they aimed to raise awareness of the change.

"I encourage Franklin County voters to vote early, either in person or by mail, to avoid confusion and possible long lines at the polls on Election Day," [Rep. Michael Stinziano](#) (D-Columbus) said.

"As the former director of the Franklin County Board of Elections, I have seen firsthand the positive impact that initiatives such as early voting have had on voter participation. Early voting, by mail or in-person, allows voters the convenience to vote at a time that works best for them."

Among the lawmakers involved were four that held a news conference in front of the Hamilton County Board of Elections: [Rep. Denise Driehaus](#) (D-Cincinnati), [Rep. Dale Mallory](#) (D-Cincinnati), [Rep. Connie Pillich](#) (D-Montgomery) and [Rep. Alicia Reece](#) (D-Cincinnati).

"We're standing here today to first and foremost encourage everyone to vote because it is such an integral element of democracy," Rep. Driehaus said. "Due to recent changes, there has been some confusion with the days and times that the polls are open that I hope we can help clear that up. More than anything we want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to vote."

Rep. Pillich, who is running for Congress next year, said, "I want the voters to know that, just like Governor Kasich's administration locked the people out of the State House to deny them their constitutional right to petition the government, Secretary of State Husted is infringing on the people's constitutional right to vote by ordering the Board of Elections to lock the early voters out ... just four days before the election."

**Issue 3:** Responding to a report from Innovation Ohio that suggests conservatives should oppose Issue 3 because it would impact right-leaning causes and legislative

efforts, proponents of the health care constitutional amendment said Thursday that pro-life groups were in support.

"Yet again, Innovation Ohio has strung together hypothetical scenarios, incorrect facts and baseless claims to underline their opposition to the Healthcare Freedom Amendment," Meghan Snyder, communications director for Ohioans for Healthcare Freedom, said in a release.

"With the majority of Ohioans behind Issue 3, the 'studies' and 'reports' by the opposition have been ineffective. Unfortunately for Innovation Ohio, their tired scare tactics are no match for the truth."

Ms. Snyder said conservative-minded groups in support of the amendment, which aims to block a portion of the federal health care law, include Citizens for Community Values Action, Ohio Right to Life, Ohio Christian Alliance and Faith2Action.

"CCV Action is proud to stand with its partners around the state against government intrusion into our health," CCV President Phil Burress said in the pro-Issue 3 release.

Added Mike Gonadakis, executive director of Ohio Right to Life, "Our statewide membership and 50 affiliated chapters remain steadfast in our support for the Healthcare Freedom Amendment. We believe its passage will preserve the freedom of Ohioans to choose healthcare coverage free of abortion funding and healthcare rationing."

IO issued a report Wednesday saying the amendment would have unintended consequences on a number of fronts, including initiatives usually backed by conservatives. (See [Gongwer Ohio Report, October 26, 2011](#))

**PPP Poll:** The latest results from a Public Policy Polling survey indicate that most Ohioans don't agree with the aims of either the Occupy Wall Street or Tea Party movements.

The poll reported Thursday that only 35% said they agree with the goals of the Occupy protesters while 43% oppose them. While 37% said they agree with Tea Party principles, 48% were in opposition.

"What we see about both of these movements in Ohio is that they're more of a turn-off to the other side than they are a rally point to their side," PPP Director Tom Jensen said in a release. "Seventy percent of Republicans support the Tea Party, but 78% of Democrats oppose it. Fifty-two percent of Democrats support Occupy Wall Street, but 68% of Republicans oppose it."

In other [poll results](#):

- Only 35% of Ohio voters approve of the job [U.S. Rep. John Boehner](#) (R-West Chester) is doing as House Speaker while 46% disapprove. He's at 34/46 with

independents. In a finding that probably is related to Boehner's numbers, Democrats have a 48-42% lead on the generic Congressional ballot in Ohio. That finding backs up recent national House polls that find the party with a similar advantage.

- Forty-three percent of voters in the state say they don't have an opinion about [U.S. Sen. Rob Portman](#)'s (R-Terrace Park) job performance - a higher level of ambivalence than the poll found toward any of the other 87 sitting Senators the group has polled on.
- Ohio reflects findings in most of the country when it comes to rights for gay couples, with voters in the state opposing gay marriage 55-32%.

**More Mitt Bashing:** Democrats can't seem to get enough of Mitt Romney - at least when it comes to bashing the former Massachusetts governor and GOP hopeful.

Two days after he declined to endorse the collective bargaining law ([SB 5](#)), on the ballot as Issue 2, and a day after he wholeheartedly endorsed it and apologized for any confusion he caused with his earlier response, Democratic groups labeled his handling of the matter as a "flip-flop-flip" and joked that he would wear red and profess unfamiliarity with the teams if he attended the upcoming Ohio State-Wisconsin football game.

"Following the game, Romney will hold a photo-op at Bob Evan's in Grandview Heights. Press will be allowed to attend and see him coming in and out of the building, but he will not take questions," the Ohio Democratic Party declared in a news release that was later given play in a [USA Today column](#).

"While speaking with restaurant patrons, Romney will thank them for eating their food and attack Bob Evan's competitors, but he will not offer his views on the Sausage Gravy & Biscuits."

**Read More (subscription required):**

[http://www.gongwer-oh.com/programming/news.cfm?article\\_ID=802080209#sthash.Y40bb4lQ.dpbs](http://www.gongwer-oh.com/programming/news.cfm?article_ID=802080209#sthash.Y40bb4lQ.dpbs)