

Date: August 28, 2020

To: Mayor John Cranley
From: Andrew W. Garth, Interim City Solicitor *AWG*
Subject: **Resolution – Against Limiting Ballot Drop Boxes** *202001426*

Transmitted herewith is a resolution captioned as follows:

EXPRESSING the Mayor and Cincinnati City Council's belief that voting should be accessible to all citizens; **OPPOSING** the Ohio Secretary of State's recent order limiting ballot drop boxes to one per county; and **SUPPORTING** legal action by the City Solicitor on behalf of the City as the City Solicitor deems appropriate to ensure sufficient numbers of accessible ballot drop boxes will be available for all Cincinnatians in furtherance of free and fair elections.

AWG/JGM/(lnk)
Attachment
319609

JGM
AWB

RESOLUTION NO. _____ - 2020

EXPRESSING the Mayor and Cincinnati City Council's belief that voting should be accessible to all citizens; **OPPOSING** the Ohio Secretary of State's recent order limiting ballot drop boxes to one per county; and **SUPPORTING** legal action by the City Solicitor on behalf of the City as the City Solicitor deems appropriate to ensure sufficient numbers of accessible ballot drop boxes will be available for all Cincinnatians in furtherance of free and fair elections.

WHEREAS, in the past, cities like Cincinnati have been adversely affected by long wait times at polling places; and

WHEREAS, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, secure drop box locations for absentee ballots will play a key role in the 2020 General Election, due to the ongoing concerns related to in-person gathering; and

WHEREAS, Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose requested a legal opinion from the Ohio Attorney General about his authority related to ballot drop boxes; and

WHEREAS, before Secretary LaRose received a legal opinion from the Attorney General, he withdrew the request and issued an order forbidding all county boards of election from installing more than one drop box; and

WHEREAS, in typical election cycles, nearly 25 percent of Ohioans choose to cast their ballots via the absentee ballot process, and with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, those numbers can be expected to be dramatically higher in the 2020 General Election; and

WHEREAS, the one ballot box in Hamilton County is located in Norwood, which is extremely distant from many Cincinnatians, especially if traveling via public transportation; and

WHEREAS, Secretary LaRose's order creates an unjust situation in which Cincinnati, with a population of over 300,000, has the same number of ballot drop boxes as entire counties with populations of under 14,000; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That the Mayor and City Council express their belief that the county boards of election must provide adequate ballot drop boxes throughout the State of Ohio to meet the needs of voters for the 2020 general election, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 2. That the Mayor and City Council oppose Secretary LaRose's order prohibiting more than one drop box per county and demands additional drop boxes within the City of Cincinnati.

Section 3. That the Mayor and City Council hereby express their support for legal action by the City Solicitor on behalf of the City as the City Solicitor deems appropriate to ensure sufficient numbers of accessible ballot drop boxes will be available for all Cincinnatians in furtherance of free and fair elections.

Section 4. That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of Council.

Passed: _____, 2020

John Cranley, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk

Submitted by Mayor John Cranley