

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COMMISSIONERS BUDGET PROVIDES FOR FAIR AND SECURE ELECTIONS

(Columbus, Ohio) Franklin County provided additional funding in the Board of Elections budget to support extended and weekend voting hours in the 2008 Presidential Election and the 2010 Gubernatorial Election. Last week's directive by Secretary of State Husted to restrict early and in person voting hours discriminates against Franklin County residents and limits their ability to participate in the democratic election process.

In order to avoid a repeat of the long lines encountered by Franklin County residents in 2004 as they turned out to vote, in 2008 County Commissioners authorized over \$4 million to support the Presidential Election which included extended and weekend voting hours to ensure residents had the opportunity to cast a ballot at their polling location.

In 2008, fifty-two thousand people in Franklin County successfully voted early and in-person during the General Election.

Commissioners anticipated providing residents with the same opportunity this November. Last year, as part of the 2012 Budget process, Commissioners added \$2.8 million more to the annual Board of Elections budget for 2012 to cover the cost of providing the same voting hours that were offered during the 2008 Presidential Election.

"Accessible, fair and secure elections provide residents who want to vote, the opportunity to do so," said Commissioner John O'Grady. "Restricting voting hours smacks of voter suppression. We have successfully managed and operated extensive early voting in Franklin County, like in 2008 and 2010. There's no legitimate reason to change course."

"As we have for years, we prudently budgeted to ensure fair and secure elections – something our residents have come to expect - would be held in Franklin County this November," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "Limiting the hours Franklin County residents can vote will certainly make it more difficult, not easier, for our residents."

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