Americans deserve better.

“Beware of the half truth. You may have gotten hold of the wrong half.”

The author of that saying is unknown but it is wise and timely advice for voters who are being bombarded with political ads and messages. One of the most dishonest half truths making the rounds recently involves statements about a legal challenge to a state law in Ohio that guarantees only military personnel the right to vote early in person during the final three days before an election.

Various measures were used to take away that popular voting time from everyone else. Republican members of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections broke with their own precedent and refused to extend hours during the final weekend of voting. Since the board vote resulted in a tie, Ohio Secretary of State John Husted was legally empowered to break the deadlock.

He sided with his fellow Republicans and kept the ban on in-person voting in the final 72 hours - Saturday, Sunday and Monday - prior to the November 6th election. (Sec. Husted, by the way, had also banned all other weekend and extended hour voting during the early voting period in

Ohio.)

As a nation, we benefit by expanding access to the ballot box to all Americans. Consider that in the 2008 general election, more than 11,400 voters chose to vote in person during the weekend and Monday just before Election Day. But that fact was noticeably absent when Gov. Romney's campaign and his backers claimed President Obama seeks to restrict early voting by members of the military.

It is true that President Obama's campaign and several other groups challenged the Ohio law in court that permits the final three-day early voting period for service members. But that's where any similarity to truth ends. The lawsuit is not about taking away the rights of our military personnel. It's about extending *the same opportunity to **all** voters*. As noted in one of the Obama campaign legal briefs, "The question before this court is whether, in the circumstances of this case, the State of Ohio may arbitrarily and without justification withdraw from all other Ohio eligible voters the same right they previously had to vote the weekend and Monday before election day."

The fact-checking journalism project known as Politifact described Gov. Romney's claim as "simply dishonest" and rated it "False." Instead of using dogs and billy clubs to intimidate voters as they did during the days of Jim Crow, the forces that seek to suppress the vote in 2012 are using laws, lies and last minute "polititricks" to shape the outcome of the election.

Americans deserve better.

I will continue to call out these tactics for what they are; attacks on the right to vote that have a disproportionately negative impact on the poor, seniors, the disabled, students and minorities. We call on America's finest to defend our democracy. Let it be for a nation that values every citizen's right to vote.