

Marcell Strbich

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Marcell Steve Strbich (born March 12, 1982) is a retired U.S. [Air Force Intelligence Officer](#),^[1] combat veteran, and advocate for election integrity. With a distinguished military career spanning tactical, operational, and strategic leadership roles worldwide, Strbich has transitioned to public issue advocacy, focusing on reforming election systems in Ohio. He is a member of the [Republican Party](#).^[2]

Personal life and early career

Born and raised in [Chicago](#),^[3] [Illinois](#),^[4] Strbich was the youngest of three children born to a family of first-generation Croatian American parents who legally immigrated to the United States in 1970. The family owned and operated Linda's Restaurant, a 50's style-diner on Chicago's Northwest Side. Strbich graduated from [St. Ignatius College Prep](#)^[5] in 2000 and attended [Indiana University](#),^[6] earning a [Bachelor of Science](#)^[7] in [Public Affairs](#)^[8]/[Policy Studies](#).^[9] He was a Distinguished Graduate of the [Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps](#)^[10] (ROTC) program at Detachment 215, commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the [U.S. Air Force](#)^[11] in 2004. Strbich is married to Nicole Theisen and has three children. He is a [Roman Catholic](#),^[12] and currently resides in [Washington Township](#),^[13] [Ohio](#).^[14]

Military Career

Upon commissioning, Lt. Strbich was assigned to [Goodfellow AFB](#)^[15] attending the U.S. Air Force [Intelligence Officer](#)^[1] training course earning [Distinguished Graduate](#)^[16] resulting in competitive selection for a flying assignment. Upon graduation Lt Strbich was assigned to [Robins AFB](#),^[17] [Georgia](#),^[18] [116th Air Control Wing](#),^[19] where he served as an [Airborne Intelligence Officer](#)^[20] instructor/evaluator onboard the [E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System \(JSTARS\)](#)^[21] deploying five times and flying 117 combat missions, totaling 1,200 hours in support of combat operations in [Iraq](#)^[22] and [Afghanistan](#).^[23] In 2008, he earned the 2008, [8th Air Force](#)^[24] [Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance \(ISR\)](#)^[25] Instructor of the Year.

Marcell Steve Strbich	
	
Election Integrity Proponent (Ohio)	
Assumed Office 2023	
Member of ...	
In Office...	
Personal Details	
Born	Marcell Steve Strbich March 12, 1982 (age 43) Chicago , ^[3] Illinois , ^[4] U.S.
Political Party	Republican ^[2]
Spouse	Nicole
Children	3
Education	Indiana University ^[6] (BS)
Military Service	
Branch/Service	U.S. Air Force ^[11]
Years of Service	2004-2024
Awards:	See below

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In 2009, Captain Strbich was assigned to the newly stood-up [17th Air Forces](#),^[26][Africa](#).^[27] where he deployed for six months with the [75th Ranger](#)^[28] regiments during the [Afghanistan](#)^[23] war surge as an [Information Operations](#)^[29] analyst. Following deployment, Captain Strbich returned to [Europe](#)^[30] to participate in combat planning and support for airborne collection operations for [Operation Odyssey Dawn](#)^[31] in [Libya](#)^[32] and redeployed with [Special Operations Africa](#) (SOCASFRICA),^[33] where he led a U.S. Embassy partnership engagement training mission in [Kenya](#)^[34] that resulted in successful [counterterrorism](#)^[35] campaign operations against [Al-Shabaab](#)^[36]

In 2011, Captain Strbich was re-assigned to the [National Air and Space Intelligence Center \(NASIC\)](#)^[37] where he formed an initial cadre and effectively stood up the Air Force [Human Intelligence](#)^[38] Squadron, generating the highest-grade [Science and Technology](#)^[39] reported, cited in multiple Presidential daily briefings. His efforts to stand-up an expeditionary strategic debriefing program for wartime [Combatant Command](#)^[40] led to being awarded the U.S. Air Force's 2013 Intelligence Company Grade Officer of the Year.

In 2014, Major Strbich was re-assigned to the [56th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron](#),^[41] [Clovis AFB](#),^[42] [New Mexico](#),^[43] where he was competitively selected as the [Director of Operations \(DO\)](#)^[44] leading 120 intelligence professionals executing operations in support of six distinct [Air Force Special Operations](#)^[45] design-series aircraft, while executing 24/7 worldwide surveillance and targeting missions in support of the [National Mission Task Force](#).^[46]

In 2016, Major Strbich was competitively selected to attend in-residence [Army Command and General Staff College](#),^[47] where he earned top 20 percent graduate distinction and selected competitively to serve with the [Joint Interagency Task Force](#)^[48] [National Capital Region \(JIATF-NCR\)](#)^[49] [U.S. Special Operations Command](#).^[50] At JIATF-NCR Strbich developed, coordinated and executed national, regional and multilateral [Special Operations Forces \(SOF\)](#)^[51] missions across 16 U.S. Government agencies leading interagency planning group information exchanges, action plans and policymaker recommendations.

In 2017, Major Strbich was assigned to the [Pentagon](#)^[52] on the [Joint Chiefs of Staff](#)^[53] in the [Intelligence Force Modernization Directorate](#).^[54]^[citation needed] In 2019, following promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, Strbich led and wrote the [Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff's](#)^[55] ["Sensor-to-Shooter"](#)^[56]^[citation needed] study identifying leading commercial technological capabilities and recommending a 20-year force design upgrade to Joint data-centric warfare requirements. Having aligned the 2018 [National Defense Strategy](#)^[57] and delivering the [Department of Defense's \(DoD\)](#)^[58] 1st national-to-tactical integrated force design plan to achieve decision advantage over near-peer competitors, Lt Colonel Strbich was awarded the 2020 Joint Staff Intelligence Directorate Officer of the Year by the [Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff](#).^[55]

In 2022, Lt. Colonel Strbich was assigned to the [Air Force Materiel Command \(AFMC\)](#)^[59] [Headquarters Directorate of ISR \(AFMC/A2\)](#)^[60] As a [Strategy and Plans Officer](#),^[61] Lt. Colonel Strbich advanced Air Force [acquisition intelligence](#)^[62] by leading a new mission [supply chain risk management](#)^[63] analytic capability fielding [digital intelligence](#)^[64] and [artificial intelligence](#)^[65] based decision-making support tools and data management services for a \$67 billion intel-sensitive weapon system program enterprise. Lt. Colonel Strbich retired after 20 years from active duty [U.S. Air Force](#)^[11] service on July 1, 2024.

Post-Military Career: Election Integrity Advocacy

In 2023, Strbich began an exhaustive risk analysis of Ohio's election laws, systems and administrative procedures documenting voter eligibility verification gaps, voting system security vulnerabilities, administrative non-compliance with federal laws and identifying opportunities to strengthen election system security and voter verifiability. In September 2023, Strbich performed a comprehensive security risk assessment of Ohio's election infrastructure and proposed to [Ohio's State House](#)^[66] legislature an enhanced military grade "critical infrastructure" certification security standard for non-compliant [Ohio Voting System](#).^[67] In October 2023, Strbich followed up his cyber-security risk management framework assessment by proposing to the [Ohio Secretary of State](#),^[68] a 1st-in-the-nation approach to adopt [Blockchain digital ledger information system technology](#)^[69] to secure and anti-tamper proof Ohio's voter registration databases. Realizing that neither state, nor county election officials and administrators, sought to implement standard of eligibility review within industry security and validation standards, or enhanced certification standards for voting systems, Strbich began documenting, presenting and writing proposed legislation to enhance security and eligibility verification review standards.

In 2024, Strbich led statewide advocacy for election reforms in the areas of cybersecurity enhanced eligibility verification review standards for voting systems and registration databases. Strbich co-wrote [H.B. 472](#)^[70]/[S.B. 274](#)^[71] [The Ohio Votes Count Act](#)^{[70][71]} submitted in May 2024, sponsored by [Ohio House Representatives](#)^[72] [Bernie Willis](#)^[73] and [Bob Peterson](#).^[74] The bill constituted comprehensive election reform that proposed improved voter registration data validation, enhanced identity and citizenship voter verification, upgrades to voting system cybersecurity certification standards and a county voting system backup that included options for Counties to choose its method of vote counting via a voter-led ballot initiative. The legislation was assigned to the [Homeland Security Committee](#)^[75] and after giving proponent testimony, the bill did not advance in through committee for a vote.

Undeterred, Strbich took on the emergent revelation of non-citizen registration and voting announced by [Ohio Secretary of State](#)^[76] [Frank LaRose](#)^[77] in May 2024. The non-citizen registration issue re-affirmed what Strbich and legislators were attempting to solve with [H.B. 472](#)^[70]/[S.B. 274](#)^[71] legislations intending to close the voter registration eligibility verification gaps. While Strbich began to vocalize Ohio's voter eligibility verification exploitation loopholes, another report emerged (June 2024) of third-party voter engagement groups having defrauded the voter registration process in [Hamilton County, Ohio](#).^[78] This was determined to be paid-for canvassers from [Black Fork Strategies](#),^[79] a progressive voter engagement organization. In response, Strbich organized and led a statewide coalition of advocacy and interest groups across Ohio. Strbich wrote and submitted a "[Open Letter of Concerned Citizens and Voters](#),"^[80] endorsed by over 50 concerned citizen-groups and elected public officials detailing known vulnerabilities to mail-in absentee voting by ineligible persons, non-citizen registration and voting, 3rd party voter engagement group defrauding of election registration and petition-ballot signing activities. Following the letter's submission, 27 [Ohio State House of Representatives](#)^[72] sent a letter to the [Secretary of State](#)^[76] inquiring into specific actions being taken to safeguard Ohio's elections and prevent ineligible registration and voting.

In August 2024, [Ohio Secretary of State](#)^[76] responded to the [Ohio Speaker of the House](#)^[81] and [Ohio Senate President](#)^[82] formally in a memorandum titled, "[Potential Election Legislation](#),"^[83] ^[citation needed] based on the citizen-action group efforts led by Strbich. Ohio's [Secretary of State](#)^[76] [Frank LaRose](#)^[77] called for a re-examination of voting assistance protocols to include elimination of drop boxes, sought legislation to enforce Ohio's constitutional citizenship

requirement and requested legislation to adopt a new provisional ballot voting requirement for voters with mismatched records.

In October 2024, Strbich brought a lawsuit against the [Montgomery County Board of Elections](#)^[84] in State, ex rel. [Strbich v. Montgomery County Board of Elections](#)^[85] asserting, “*the integrity of the forthcoming general election is threatened by the failure of the Montgomery County Board of Elections and its members to comply with their legal duties.*” In an expedited ruling the [Ohio Supreme Court](#)^[86] granted a writ of mandamus in part, ordering the board to provide poll workers with the required training to the affected individuals to identify non-citizen designated markings on state-issued identity credentials.

In November 2024, Strbich co-wrote and presented proponent testimony in the [Ohio State House of Representatives](#)^[72] for [H.B. 552 Voter Verification Act](#)^[87] sponsored by Representatives [Scott Wiggam](#)^[88] and [Beth Lear](#).^[89] [H.B. 552 Voter Verification Act](#)^[87] proposed proof of citizenship identity verification standards upon registration to vote and sought to adopt new provisional ballot voting requirements for voters with mismatched registration records while prohibiting the use of outdoor drop boxes. The bill was assigned to the [Government Oversight Committee](#)^[90] and after giving proponent testimony the bill did not advance through committee with a vote.

Military Decorations and Awards

- [Bronze Star](#)^[91]
- [Defense Meritorious Service Medal](#)^[92]
- [Air Medal](#)^[93](5 Devices)
- [Aerial Achievement Medal](#)^[94]
- [Joint Service Commendation Medal](#)^[95]
- [Air Force Commendation Medal](#)^[96]
- [Army Achievement Medal](#)^[97]
- [Combat Readiness Medal](#)^[98](2 Devices)
- [Iraq Campaign Medal](#)^[99]w/silver star cluster
- [Afghanistan Campaign Medal](#)^[100]w/bronze star cluster
- [2004 Distinguished Graduate](#)^[101]AFROTC Det 215
- [2005 Distinguished Graduate](#)^[101]Intelligence Officer Course
- [2008 8th AF Outstanding Officer ISR Instructor of the Year](#)^[102] [citation needed]
- [2013 AF ISR Agency Company Grade Officer of the Year](#)^[103] [citation needed]
- [2019 Defense Intelligence Agency Lance P. Sijan Leadership Winner](#)^[104] [citation needed]
- [2020 Joint Staff Intelligence Directorate Action Officer of the Year](#)^[105] [citation needed]
- [2022 HQ AFMC Intelligence Field Grade Officer of the Year](#)^[106] [citation needed]

2026 Ohio Secretary of State Campaign

In April 2025, Strbich traveled to Washington as a member of a national election task force to meet with White House Domestic Policy Council to discuss statewide implementation of President Donald J. Trumps Executive Order 14248: *Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections*.

In May 2025, Strbich publicly announced his filing and candidacy in [Medina, Ohio](#)^[107] to seek the office of the [Secretary of State](#)^[76] in the May 2026 primary. Strbich's political outsider campaign featured at [StrbichForOhio.com](#)^[108] is characterized as “*Mission-Focused, Results Driven*” and proposes to implement a “One Day, One Vote” approach to safeguard Ohio's elections on the following points.

- Voter ID required to register and vote
- Paper ballots only, no electronic vote casting machines
- Proof of citizenship to register and vote
- In-person voting - no universal vote by mail
- Smaller voting precincts
- Election Day = Federal/State Holiday
- Results by 10:00 P.M., winners announced by midnight
- Make it easier to do business in Ohio through streamlined processes and reduced fees

As of July 1, 2025, Marcell Strbich's determination and stance on election integrity has become infectious with many fellow political figures, institutions, and constituents, garnering professional and personal endorsements from former/current members of the Ohio [House of Representatives](#),^[72] former candidates for the Ohio [Secretary of State](#)^[76] and [U.S. Senate](#),^[109] and leaders/personality's from the [National Election Integrity](#),^[110] [United Hellenic Voters of America](#),^[111] and [Ohio Press Network](#).^[112]

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