



Written Testimony: In Favor of SB 315

Angie Schmitt, Cleveland resident, member Clevelanders for Public Transit and mother

I am writing to support Senate Bill 315 that would provide a small but much needed funding boost for Ohio's urban transit systems. State support for transit in Ohio lags behind its peers. Funding for public transit in Ohio has been reduced 83 percent since 2000.

I live in Cleveland, where GCRTA is being forced to raise fares and cut service because of a funding crunch. The increase amounts to a tax increase on some of the poorest residents in the state. An independent research group recently named Cleveland the most distressed city in the country. This region hasn't recovered from the loss of manufacturing jobs. Without adequate transit many people who would like to work might be forced to leave the workforce and wind up on public assistance.

Furthermore, transit and walkable cities are increasingly important to both millennials and aging baby boomers. To retain the best and brightest young people, we're going to have to be able to compete with places like Washington, D.C. and Seattle. Those places are investing in transit while we divest.

I urge you to not just pass SB 315, but increase funding for transit – urban transit systems especially – above and beyond what has been proposed.

Respectfully,

Angie Schmitt