



HB164
Opponent Testimony
Economic Development,
Commerce & Labor Committee

Chairman Young, Representative Patton, and other distinguished members of the committee, thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony. I think it is important to hear conversations and discussions from both sides in order to make an effective decision that would affect hundreds of businesses and their respective families, employees and customers alike.

My name is Andrew Martinez, I am one of the member directors for the Ohio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Board Member & Committeeman for the Columbus Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and I am a business owner, a developer throughout the midwest region with our home base in Ohio. One of the many benefits of my businesses is that we are able to be cost effective because we hire everyone to do the work of developing a residential or commercial properties. We have multiple subdivisions that are able to generate additional income for our company by working with other developers and contractors. One of these businesses is our roofing company, that does residential, and another that focuses solely on commercial.

The proposed bill would open the pathways for additional restrictions and regulations to the commercial aspect of our business, however I have the ability to have a team of attorneys and policy advisor, and the fact that I am connected with multiple organizations that keep me up to date with anything that could potentially affect my business. This bill indeed favors companies such as mine that are able to quickly navigate through the process and the red tape, but is very harmful to smaller businesses who require the owner to work alongside the workers, ensure the job is on track day in and day out.

I look back to when my father began the company back in 1989, and I know he was in the same position as many of these small businesses, he struggled very hard. Yet he managed to cultivate a great team and begin to expand into other areas of the industry. Which is why I am here today, I advocate not only for the members of the chamber, the chambers themselves or even my own company, but for the fathers and mothers in the business starting small, who are creating more jobs and helping build onto our economy. For the young apprentice with dreams of starting his own firm.

The industry is already heavily regulated, and this bill is simply to vague in it's requirements of the contractors to obtain licensing, in educational background, in the fees associated. It creates an increase in expenses for additional bureaucracy. Permit requirements, Coding Expectations, Inspections, Reviews and supervision are already in place in order to protect all parties involved. Furthermore, regulation at a local level such as in Cleveland by having to be a part of the Cleveland Building Construction & Trades Council, and Manufacturer Certification, in which we send our employees out of state to learn, and keep up with the ever-changing methods, products, and technology of the trade.

Let's call this bill for what it is, a path for large competitors to have an additional edge over small businesses and take contracts away from small businesses. This will also result in price increases, less competition means less bidding, resulting in consumers paying more for the same job. A similar bill like this was attempted the previous year, with unsuccessful results. I am asking this committee, to once again stand against this bill until a more succinct, clear, precise bill can be proposed that would not add additional expenses to businesses, create a hindrance on growth. We should include more of the smaller businesses in these discussions, not only include the big name players that are easy to get ahold of. In fact, at a recent programming event we had

for the Columbus Chamber, when we mentioned this bill along with the other 3 related to construction many if not all of our members were unaware that this was even happening?

So how are we making decisions without taking all parties affected, opinions into mind? I implore this committee to review the facts, hear all the testimony and hold any decisions until they have had the proper time to be able to go out into the communities they serve and throughout all of Ohio and speak with these small business owners, with employees and see how this will really affect the 98%.

Corporations will not be affected by this bill at all, they will continue to obtain major contract, continue to stay updated with the legalities and changes, however the small guy, they will feel this everyday. We will see a decrease in small business owners, see a decrease in fair competition, and an increase in corporate projects, and pricing of the industry due to the higher demand.

I thank you all for your time, and hope you make the right choice, the right decision to protect small businesses.

With Regards,
Andrew Martinez
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Member Director - Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce
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