



**HB 65 Proponent Testimony
Presented by Steve McElhatten, Mortellaro's McDonald's
Before the House State and Local Government Committee
Chair Marlene Anielski
March 7, 2017**

Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Bishoff and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony today on House Bill 65. My name is Steve McElhatten, and I am the Vice President of Operations for Mortellaro's McDonald's. Our company operates 17 McDonald's Restaurants in 4 counties in Ohio.

Being entrusted with the McDonald's name carries a large responsibility, and it's one that we do not take lightly. Our company is dedicated to providing high quality service to our customers, and food safety is our top priority. We have worked incredibly hard to develop and implement systems in each of our locations so that proper food safety practices are consistently and effectively executed.

In order to accomplish this, we worked with the local health departments where our restaurants are located. Taking a collaborative approach to food safety with the entity that regulates our operations has resulted in a higher level of food safety being implemented within our company. This approach has been refreshing and welcomed, and more importantly, it has improved food safety.

Our support of House Bill 65 is based on one factor...food safety. I am not here to advocate for easier inspections in our restaurants. I am here to urge you to allow the health inspectors that inspect our facilities to be able to exercise professional judgement and common sense. House Bill 65 will accomplish this by allowing them to take a risk-based approach to inspections that focus on critical violations that have an increased chance of causing foodborne illness. This approach is something that McDonald's supports, and it's one that I support because it will allow our restaurants to provide safer food to our customers.

Requiring health inspectors to identify every cracked floor tile and missing lightbulb in our facilities will not improve the safety of the food we serve. It will lead to a more adversarial relationship between restaurants and health departments, which will not improve food safety. I'm hopeful that you will see the importance of this legislation, rather than voting against it, and essentially supporting the overregulation of food operations in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding this legislation. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.