



**Kristin Boggs**

State Representative  
18<sup>th</sup> House District

**Adam Miller**

State Representative  
17<sup>th</sup> House District

Representatives Kristin Boggs and Adam C. Miller Sponsor Testimony (as prepared) for HB 633 Before the House State and Local Government Committee

Representative Kristin Boggs

Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the State and Local Government Committee.

Thank you for allowing Representative Miller and me the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 633. The opioid epidemic and the loss of jobs has had a significant impact on many neighborhoods. Our communities are not only suffering economically, but are physically deteriorating with the addition of excessive debris in yards, alleys, streets, etc.

Communities struggle to deal with urban blight caused by factors that include the opioid crisis and lack of employment opportunities. Rampant garbage and debris have spread in many of these communities, often on abandoned properties. This trash creates more than just eyesores. It creates health hazards, harbors pollutants and rodents, and greatly reduces property values.

There are environmental activists on the ground, attempting to pick-up garbage and alleviate urban blight as much as humanly possible, but their committed efforts can only go so far. It is our duty as the legislative body to alleviate this struggle and provide a means to not only keep property owners held accountable, but to keep our communities intact.

Many of these activists spend hundreds of hours a year personally cleaning up their neighborhoods. They need our help. This bill does that.

Thank you for your time, I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.



Representative Adam C. Miller

Thank you Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes and members of the committee.

I also want to thank Representative Boggs for her dedication and her work with me on this effort to help our districts combat urban blight

I have visited many of these areas in Columbus with community leaders – like Representative Boggs - and activists and have seen firsthand the challenges they face.

Traditionally, Ohioans have had to use nuisance suits to clean up these types of blighted properties. This can be a long and costly procedure.

Ohio's littering laws are much more robust and, as such, represent an avenue for more effective action. However, they do not include excessive garbage and debris left by the landowner, tenant, or agent on their own property.

This bill would create a criminal penalty – under the existing littering laws in Ohio - for municipal property owners who fail – by their own actions – to keep their own property free of significant garbage and debris. Any litter that creates a danger to life or health would qualify, and owners will have the opportunity to clean up their properties before any sanction would be imposed.

The bill maintains existing judicial and prosecutorial discretion. The penalties mirror existing littering laws and courts will have the ability to order cleanup in accordance with these laws.

I appreciate the committee's time and am happy to answer any questions.