

The Honorable Marlene Anielski
The Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street, 12th floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chair Anielski,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on House Bill 65. As the Health Commissioner for Columbus Public Health, and on behalf of our registered sanitarians, sanitarians-in-training and the nearly 850,000 Columbus and Worthington residents we serve, I write in support of the *substitute* version of HB 65.

CPH's mission is to protect the health and improve the lives of all people in our community, and our sanitarians promote public health by conducting environmental health inspections and related activities for retail food establishments and food service operations (restaurants). Our work includes determining compliance with local and state public health laws, preparing inspection reports that cite violations, documenting deficiencies, and recommending improvements. Our sanitarians hold, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree with significant coursework in natural and/or environmental sciences and earn a certificate of registration as a sanitarian, in addition to participating in robust continuing education.

The substitute bill's provisions to allow for a written examination will eliminate much of the ambiguity that has been observed when our sanitarians are surveyed by the departments of Agriculture and Health, particularly as it relates to the overemphasis on non-critical violations over the critical violations that cause foodborne illnesses. The new medium of testing will dramatically cut down on time spent by the regulating departments and our sanitarians, often times up to eight hours per sanitarian. By providing for a written exam, constructive feedback can be provided immediately from ODH and ODA to help us mutually protect our community's health and help us educate retailers. This standardization removes any subjectivity in calculating the formula that determines if a local health department's sanitarians can or cannot identify 80 percent or more of violations.

Columbus Public Health firmly believes in the goal of periodic reviews which productively enhance our sanitarians' ability to protect health. The proposed substitute bill will provide us with immediate feedback to address violations and engage in targeted professional trainings and development. For those reason, I am supportive of the substitute bill's provisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to write to you on this important legislation. If you have any questions, please contact Columbus Public Health's director of public health policy, Edward Johnson, at (614) 645-7284 or edjohnson@columbus.gov and we will reply promptly.

Best of Health,



Mysheika W. Roberts, MD, MPH
Health Commissioner
Columbus Public Health

