



Sponsor Testimony

State Representative Brian Baldrige

House Bill 289

Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 289. This bill is designed to modernize the current statute to increase safety, transparency, and accountability in the operation, installation, and ongoing maintenance of elevators throughout the state.

Elevators and escalators are some of the most commonly used forms of transportation in America, and most people do not give their personal safety a second thought when using them. Public safety is the top concern for both the elevator manufacturers and the mechanics who install them, and that is why both groups have joined together to support this life safety legislation. All elevators in every public building provide convenience and also serve as part of the life safety system—a fact recognized by both companies and industry workers.

For the average person working in the Riffe Center, they drive to work once and then ride elevators and escalators several times per day as they go to meetings, get lunch, and go to the statehouse. One trip from the Riffe Center to the Statehouse requires an elevator ride, potentially two escalator rides and maybe another elevator ride depending on the location of the meeting in the Statehouse. The return trip will include the same number of rides on conveyances. This pattern is repeated by legislators and staff several times every day. Personal safety at each point is taken for granted.

The Division of Industrial Compliance has a team of elevator inspectors that have the highest level of training available and the state is well served by their performance. This bill addresses what happens between inspections.

Unlike most other states, Ohio does not have a system to license the mechanics who install and maintain elevators and other conveyances. The goal of this bill is to require elevator mechanics to be licensed by the state of Ohio and creates the following regulatory framework:

- The bill applies to all mechanics working on elevators accessible to the general public.

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- The bill requires Elevator Mechanics to complete a training program recognized by the US Department of Labor, there are two:
 - o National Elevator Industry Educational Program (NEIEP)
 - o Certified Elevator Technician (CET)
- Both training programs require an apprenticeship program that allows mechanics to learn under the supervision of a licensed mechanic while earning a living.
- The bill exempts residential elevators, but requires an initial inspection and an additional inspection if and when the home is sold.
- The bill places the regulation in the Division of Industrial Compliance, where elevator inspectors currently reside.
- The bill allows the Division to charge a fee to cover the cost of the regulation.
- The bill creates an appeals process within the Board of Building Standards in the event an elevator mechanic loses his or her license.
- The bill grandfathers Ohio's current workforce into the regulatory framework as well as workers who meet the same standards in other states.
- The bill provides companies the ability to hire additional elevator mechanics during emergency situations.
- The bill requires continuing education.

Conveyances in modern buildings are extremely complicated engineering systems. They are also an integral part of the daily lives of building tenants and the general public. In an emergency situation, firefighters and other first responders need and expect elevators to work properly, and to have their safety features functioning correctly. This life safety legislation will bring Ohio in line with a majority of our boarding states, such as Indiana and Kentucky, and will protect the public and our first responders by filling a glaring hole in Ohio's elevator regulations.

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Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today and I would be happy to answer any questions.