

Testimony of Jim Miller
International Union of Elevator Constructors Local 11
National Elevator Industry Educational Program
Proponent of HB 289
Ohio House Commerce and Labor Committee
November 13, 2019

Chairwoman Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and Members of the Ohio House, Commerce and Labor Committee thank you for this opportunity to testify today in support of HB 289.

My name is Jim Miller and I have been an elevator constructor for 40 years. I am also a certified trainer for the National Elevator Industry Educational Program (NEIEP). I also serve as the business manager for the International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC) Local 11 in Cincinnati and I am currently on the ACT Ohio Board.

I have spent my entire professional career building and maintaining elevators and training others to do the same, and over the course of my career I have come to understand one very basic fact of life—all elevators are life safety systems.

Elevators and escalators are some of the most common forms of transportation in the world. This morning I drove up from Cincinnati and parked in the Huntington garage. I took two elevators to get to a meeting, another elevator and two escalators to the statehouse underground and another elevator to get to this hearing room. I have already ridden 6 conveyances to get to this committee hearing.

The reason I mention that is to point out that most people never give elevators a second thought, they just expect them to work, and in most cases they do.

At the start of the previous General Assembly we asked the former sponsors (Rep. Patton and Cupp) to include all elevators, escalators and chair lifts. Through negotiations with other interested parties, the bill now exempts chair lifts and elevators in residential homes because the homeowner is responsible for the conveyance on their property. As an aside I would encourage anyone who is installing an elevator in a home to have it installed professionally. Home elevators do not always have the same safety features as commercial elevators. And never let children play on them.

Last General Assembly we were asked to exempt Limited Use/Limited Application elevators—otherwise known as LU/LAs. A LU/LA elevator is an elevator that has been retrofitted to go into buildings that were not originally designed to have elevators.

The need for LU/LAs arose after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Many buildings that were built before ADA did not have an elevator, but were required to find a place in the building to incorporate one. The vast majority of LU/LAs are in churches and schools. They are often tucked away into small spaces that were originally designed to be a small room or even a closet. As such they require additional engineering—variances from the original design

to make them fit into less than ideal spaces. They also have their own ASME code that allows for lower clearances for machinery. LU/LAs are also restricted in how fast they can move and how many feet they are allowed to travel.

In most cases the only people who use LU/LAs are wheelchair users or that are incapable of using stairs. As proponents of House Bill 289, we strongly oppose the effort to exempt elevators designed for people with disabilities from a bill designed to help ALL people.

Thank you for your time, I am happy to answer questions.