

**Committees:**

**Finance and Appropriations, Ranking Member**  
Agriculture and Rural Development  
Ways and Means

Member of the State Controlling Board  
Member of Ohio Retirement Study Council



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-466-3735  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
FAX: 614-719-6995  
Email: [rep96@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:rep96@ohiohouse.gov)

**JACK CERA**

**State Representative**

77 S. High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111  
[www.house.state.oh.us](http://www.house.state.oh.us)

**HB 98 Sponsor Testimony**

**Economic and Workforce Development Committee**  
**Wednesday, March 27, 2019**

Chairman Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobecki, and members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share information with you on the importance of HB 98. This legislation will restore the Rural Industrial Park Loan Fund which helps in the financing of projects through loans and loan guarantees.

Much of rural Ohio is dealing with a severe lack of capital investment. Businesses wishing to locate in rural parts of our state might be unable to take on the additional risk of breaking ground in an area without a certain level of infrastructure support. With such a wealth of resources, rural Ohio should be a natural fit for a diverse set of enterprises.

The Rural Industrial Park Loan Program is about leveling the playing field. Historically, underserved, rural parts of the state stand to benefit the most from the addition of new business development. A single new company could make a huge impact in a small community.

House Bill 98 is also aimed at putting money that the state already has to work for rural Ohio. The Facilities Establishment Fund currently holds over \$300 million dollars, and only gives out on average \$13 million worth of loans a year while loan repayments make up some \$45 million coming in annually. This bill asks for only \$25 million dollars of this massive and massively underutilized fund to make the conditions right for job creation.

Rural Ohio needs this support, because job creation and prosperity should not be limited to any one part of the state. In Appalachian Ohio along, this program helped develop a dozen sites and created hundreds of jobs prior to being repealed in 2015.

Chairman Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobecki, and members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, I respectfully urge you to consider supporting HB 98. Please feel free to direct any questions you may have to my office and I will be happy to respond.