



*Representative Don Manning*

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to allow us to provide sponsor testimony for HB 476. I would like to take my time to explain why this legislation is so necessary.

Several months ago, I was approached by, farmers, property owners, and business owners in my district who are at risk of losing property for the creation of a bike trail. Several farm owners are facing the very real possibility that acres of their land are about to be cut off from the rest of their property. A father also contacted me to express the very real concern that the proposed trail will run fifteen feet from his young daughter's bedroom window. Members of a sportsmen's club in my district have also expressed their concerns. The proposed trail will require them to re-locate their shooting range, as the trail will cut through the club property. They will also have to re-evaluate several of their other operations if the trail is created.

After talking with my fellow legislators, similar situations exist across the state, and I have been contacted by numerous Ohioans sharing their similar stories. Many of these individuals are not able to afford the expensive court battle that is sure to occur. This legislation gives our constituents another avenue to protect their property from the government's reach. The collaborative environment between property owners, local legislative authorities, and un-elected government authorities that this bill creates will surely help ensure that the use of eminent domain for a recreational trail is in the best interest of all involved.

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony, and we welcome any questions that you may have.