

POLISH CULTURAL CENTER



Honorable Members of the General Government and Agency Review Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony in support of SB 261 to establish an Eastern European Commission in Ohio. A commission of this sort will help facilitate the woven heritage of many nations whose immigrants now call Ohio home.

As we plan to build a Polish Cultural Center (PCC) in northwest Ohio, we have already begun to work with the local Hungarian community to collaborate on museum projects. The PCC will be the first of its kind in the region and will be a catalyst for community engagement and economic development.

The demographics are clear. There are, by historical estimations, almost 100,000 people who have some lineage to Polish immigrants who settled in northwest Ohio. Eastern Europeans as a larger group make up another 200,000 in northwest Ohio alone. Discussions are already underway with the eastern European community to program events common to eastern Europeans.

An Eastern European Commission will preserve history by recognizing the importance of immigrants while, at the same time, laying the groundwork for future global relations that will benefit the Buckeye State.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of establishing this commission.

Respectfully,
Tom Waniewski
Polish Cultural Center Advisory Chair
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Proud to be supported by these fine Polish organizations