



**Before the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee
Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 222**

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, my name is Stephanie Kromer, and I am the Director of Energy and Environmental Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. On behalf of the 8,000 members of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, I would like to express our support for Senate Bill 222. SB 222 would preempt local government attempts to impose a ban or assessment of a tax, fee or other charges on auxiliary containers. This statewide preemption would stop the development of a cumbersome patchwork of local ordinances that would negatively impact Ohio businesses and consumers.

An auxiliary container, as defined in the bill, is a bag, can, cup, food service item, keg, bottle or other container or packaging made of many different materials. Auxiliary containers are used to consume, transport or protect merchandise, food or beverages obtained at a food service operation, or from retail food establishments, grocery stores or any type of retail, manufacturing or distribution establishment.

Local ordinances that impose a tax or ban on these containers result in added costs that directly impact the bottom line for many businesses, both large and small. They also can create compliance problems for a business, as the ordinances often mandate strict measuring, counting, record-keeping and reporting rules with which a business is forced to comply. These added costs not only impact a business' bottom line, but the extra tax also impacts consumer purchasing power by making every trip to a store, restaurant or establishment that utilizes auxiliary containers more expensive.

In addition, these ordinances represent a threat to the viability of auxiliary container manufacturers – many of whom operate right here in Ohio – and their employees.

By prohibiting local governments from interfering in matters concerning the private sector, SB 222 will protect retail establishments, manufacturers and consumers and, ultimately, our state's overall economic competitiveness. For these reasons, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce respectfully asks members of the committee to favorably report SB 222. Thank you.