



OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE

THE OHIO SENATE TRANSPORTATION, COMMERCE AND WORKFORCE COMMITTEE
INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY FOR AMENDED HOUSE BILL 62
KEARY MCCARTHY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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Chairman McColley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Amended House Bill 62. My name is Keary McCarthy and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Mayors Alliance, a bipartisan coalition of mayors in Ohio's largest cities and suburbs.

Throughout the committee process in both chambers, you have heard from a number of our members regarding the urgent need for a meaningful and sustainable solution to Ohio's transportation funding needs. Those cities include Akron, Dayton, Columbus, Kettering, Lima, Middletown, and Toledo. Today, you will hear from Mayor Chase Ritenauer of Lorain, Ohio. Before I turn it over to the Mayor, I'd like to summarize a few points that are important to our coalition members.

First, we appreciate the work that the Ohio House did to increase the share of revenue for local governments. However, we are still encouraging the Senate to move the total motor fuel user fee to a rate that is closer to the 18 cents per gallon that Gov. DeWine proposed at the outset of this process. Even with a 5 percent increase in the local share, the reduction on the overall rate approved by the House will result in a lower amount to locals than the original proposal.

Second, it also important to our cities that ODOT's TRAC program has the resources it needs to address Ohio's major transportation infrastructure projects. Even when certain TRAC projects aren't directly in our city limits, these projects still play an incredibly important role to our local infrastructure networks and our regional economies.

Third, we appreciate the work that the House did to ensure that there are meaningful resources available for public transit. Public transportation is important to many of our communities to help decrease congestion and connect workers to job opportunities. Ohio's commitment to public transit has lagged the nation and maintaining the House changes would be a positive step in the right direction.

Fourth, there are several provisions in the House-passed version of the bill that are concerning to several of our communities. These provisions involve the regulation of low-speed scooters. There have been some productive discussions among the stakeholders about this language and we're hopeful there can be some regulatory framework established that does not pre-empt the local ordnancing process.

We are also concerned about several additional provisions regarding traffic cameras. There has been other testimony on these provisions so we will not repeat what has already been submitted. However, we understand that there is an ongoing difference of opinion about the use of these traffic cameras as a matter of policy. Despite court rulings and ongoing litigation, we understand that this debate is not over.

However, the bill before you today to address Ohio's transportation funding needs is already challenging without this controversial language. We would urge this committee to remove these provisions from the bill and allow this policy debate to continue in another legislative vehicle. We do not think it is appropriate to make an already difficult matter even more complicated by allowing this language to remain in the bill.

Again, we do appreciate the time and attention that you are giving to this very difficult matter. We also appreciate the leadership that Gov. DeWine has shown in addressing Ohio's transportation funding shortfall with a serious and responsible remedy. We urge the members of this committee and the Ohio Senate to do the same.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration of this testimony.