**HB 27 Proponent Testimony**

To: Chair Hottinger, Vice Chair Hackett, Ranking Minority Member Brown, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to give written testimony in support of HB 27. My testimony is in reference to the section of HB 27 regarding the ineligibility of workers compensation benefits for illegal aliens.

Under the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), illegal aliens are unauthorized to obtain employment in the United States. Also, under IRCA it is a crime for an employer to knowingly hire an illegal alien who is unauthorized to work in the United States.

Under federal law it is a felony for an illegal alien to present oneself as a citizen, for example- an illegal alien claiming to be a citizen to an employer (18 U.S.C. § 911). It also is a felony for an illegal alien to make false statements to our government or on official documents such as an illegal alien claiming to be a citizen on an I-9 worker eligibility form (18 U.S.C. § 1001).

Illegal aliens should not be entitled to receive workers compensation benefits when it is unlawful for an illegal alien to be in our country and obtain employment. It should not fall on the shoulders of the state of Ohio to provide benefits to those who ignore our laws. Employees who are impaired by alcohol or drugs (not prescribed by a physician) at the time of an injury accident at their workplace are not covered by benefits through workers compensation (ORC 4123.54), neither should illegal aliens be covered by WC benefits.

Illegal aliens cannot return to their place of employment after an injury as the illegal alien is unauthorized to return to employment. Not being able to return to work, such as a light duty assignment while recovering from an injury, may lead to elevated WC premium costs.

As it stands prior to HB 27 an illegal alien who receives benefits from BWC and is either deported or returns willingly to his home country, it would be extremely difficult to observe the illegal alien for fraud, example- working in another country while receiving WC benefits.

Our economy will grow in Ohio when we have fair and equal opportunity for law-abiding employers and employees. It is difficult to compete as a business owner when an unscrupulous business owner can pay lower wages to those illegally in our country. I ask for your support for HB 27.

Respectfully,

Julie Aldrich

Portage County, Ohio