



COUNTY OF SUMMIT

THE HIGH POINT OF OHIO

Ilene Shapiro, Executive • Summit County Council Members

March 19, 2018

TO: Senate Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Ilene Shapiro, Executive, County of Summit
John N. Schmidt, President, Summit County Council

RE: Support for Senate Bill 252

The purpose of this letter is to convey our support for the passage of Senate Bill 252, and we kindly request the committee consider this letter as part of its deliberation on the matter.

As you are aware, pursuant to the Opinions 2017-036 and 2017-037, the Ohio Attorney General has determined that due to a potential conflict of interest, the positions of County Commissioner and Director of Economic Development are incompatible with the position of trustee of a convention and visitors bureau (CVB). In the wake of these opinions, the representatives of the Summit County Executive's Office and Summit County Council resigned from the Akron Summit Convention and Visitors Bureau board on January 16, 2018. Senate Bill 252 would resolve this issue by eliminating the incompatibility of these two positions.

It is our firm belief that holding county elected office or being employed by a county office while also serving as a trustee of a CVB should be permissible under Ohio law. Serving in such a dual capacity is critical to remaining engaged in the activities of a local CVB and is the only substantive means of participating in its strategic goals and objectives. Further, both the County and the CVB share the goal of attracting visitors, businesses and talent to our community, and having representation on the CVB board ensures coordination of these important efforts. Additionally, having a presence on the CVB board ensures that a county's key elected office holders can monitor the CVB's spending of taxpayer dollars.

For these reasons, we again would like to express our support for Senate Bill 252. We thank you for your time and attention on this issue and we trust you will give this bill the proper consideration it deserves.

Sincerely,

Ilene Shapiro
Executive, County of Summit

John N. Schmidt
Summit County Council President
District 2 Representative

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