



OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE

**Ohio Mayors Alliance
Opponent Testimony to House Bill 288-Written Testimony
September 25, 2019**

Chairman Hambley, Vice Chairman Patton, Ranking Member Brown and members of the House Civil Justice Committee:

On behalf of the Ohio Mayors Alliance, a bipartisan coalition of mayors in Ohio's largest cities and suburbs, we write to you today in opposition to House Bill 288. House Bill 288 is a violation of municipal Home Rule authority and represents a local issue that should be handled at the local level in our cities.

While the bill's legislation text reads that such an amendment is "necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety", we believe that it will institute the very opposite. Without the ability for municipalities to take property for the purpose of creating recreational trails, the connectivity and safety of the community is threatened. Infrastructure such as public trails that are used for nonmotorized travel are crucial for the safe mobility of pedestrians and bikers.

The process of acquiring land through eminent domain has complex steps that need to be considered, and only after being deemed productive for the well-being of the community, is the request authorized. While rarely exercised, the use of Eminent Domain is utilized with the purpose of benefiting the community as a whole. When employed, the property owner is compensated for the land acquired.

As the Mayors Alliance, we oppose any bills that would hinder local control of local issues. This bill takes away our cities' right to govern their communities and protect the safety and well-being of its residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Keary McCarthy
Executive Director, Ohio Mayors Alliance