

September 13, 2019

Chairman Gayle Manning
Commerce and Labor Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chair Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and committee members,

As Chair of the Columbus North Central Area Commission, I want to convey the deepest opposition to House Bill 219 on behalf of my constituents and myself. Our right to affect policy through voting is at issue. It is a right that should be protected.

The right to vote for or against liquor permits gives voters some degree of influence over the businesses whose operations have an impact on our communities. This is particularly important in the ten neighborhoods comprising our area commission and others like them. Not one permit holder within the North Central Area Commission boundary has a Sunday license. Not one Sunday sales question has passed. As a result we have some measure of peace on Sunday.

Crime statistics in Columbus demonstrate year after year that Sunday has the lowest incidence of reported crimes of any day of the week, despite higher incidence of reported crime in the early a.m. hours pertaining to Saturday night. Young people and those battling alcohol addiction don't hang out and loiter around businesses when no alcohol is sold on Sunday, which reduces potential crime that could occur as a result. We're proud of our residents' ability to work together to maximize our opportunities for peace resulting from our dry votes on Sunday.

Many of our residents lack private transportation and rely on their local carry outs for necessities. While we have the option to vote them dry for weekly beer and wine sales, doing so would in some cases have the unintended consequence of driving them out. The owners have invested in these businesses, often fixing up and improving the properties. Tolerating beer and wine sales six days per week is a necessity we can live with. Six days is enough.

There have been too many assaults on our right to vote. We don't need the right to participate further curtailed, which is exactly what House Bill 219 would do. Vote no on House Bill 219 and preserve our rights as voters to protect the integrity of our neighborhoods on Sunday.

Sincerely,
Tiffany White
Chair