



**Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
Proponent Testimony – House Bill 168 (Arndt)
Jason Warner – Manager of Government Affairs, Greater Ohio Policy Center
Wednesday, May 6, 2020**

Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Schaffer, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee: Greater Ohio Policy Center appreciates this opportunity to provide additional testimony regarding House Bill 168 (HB168), a bill to establish an affirmative defense to a release or threatened release of hazardous substances from a facility for certain bona fide prospective purchasers (BFPP).

My name is Jason Warner, and I am the Manager of Government Affairs at the Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC). Greater Ohio is the state's champion for urban revitalization and sustainable growth. Our mission is to improve the communities of Ohio through smart growth strategies and research. Our vision is a revitalized Ohio.

HB168 is a crucial tool for economic recovery in the state – now more than ever as the state faces economic uncertainties. Ohio has the potential to bring in millions of dollars in additional tax revenue, provide jobs, and create new housing options if we seize the opportunity to redevelop the thousands of environmentally contaminated sites – known as brownfields. Found in every county, these former industrial and commercial sites are unusable for new development in their current condition. These blighted properties discourage investment and create barriers to job creation across the state.

GOPC has reviewed the proposed amendment to HB168 and supports its inclusion in the bill as it does not change or alter the original intent of the legislation. Instead, this amendment enhances the original stated goal of the bill, which seeks to:

- **Better align Ohio's law with the federal BFPP standards.**
- **Place Ohio on equal footing with neighboring states.**
- **Encourage brownfield redevelopment by offering a more cost-effective means for returning brownfields to productive use.**

Over the past few weeks, Ohio's communities have been met with the challenges faced by COVID-19. Inevitably, communities across the state will continue to face economic difficulty with the loss of tax revenues. **The swift passage of HB168 is another tool that can bring revenue to the State by redeveloping these blighted brownfields into productive use.** Public and private sector stakeholders agree and recognize the benefits HB168 will bring to Ohio, which include tax revenues and job creation.

Chairman Hoagland and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am happy to answer any questions.