

Senator Sean J. O'Brien  
Ohio Senate  
32<sup>nd</sup> District



Senator Stephanie Kunze  
Ohio Senate  
16<sup>th</sup> District

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**Sponsor Testimony: Senate Bill (SB) 346**  
**Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee**  
**September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

**Senator O'Brien:**

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee, thank you for allowing us to present sponsor testimony today on SB 346, legislation that would repeal HB 6 from earlier in this General Assembly.

In light of recent events involving the federal investigation into corruption charges against former Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder and efforts that went into the passage of HB 6, Senator Kunze and I felt duty-bound to introduce SB 346 to repeal that tainted piece of legislation.

As public servants, it is our constitutional charge to always act in the best interest of all Ohioans. This includes not taking bribes to further the interests of individual corporations or other entities, and not passing legislation that will put a significant financial burden on taxpayers just for power's sake and to line the pockets of oneself and a few select cronies. The evidence laid out by federal authorities against Speaker Householder and his associates related to the passage of HB 6 was overwhelming, and this legislation cannot be allowed to stand.

Furthermore, these events put into stark relief the insidious and pervasive role played by dark money in American politics throughout the country. Failure to repeal HB 6 would allow it to stand as a monument to the corrupting power of dark money – now and into the future - to bend the legislature to their will as long as they are willing to spend enough cash.

This is not a partisan issue. Rather, it is a signal to the people of Ohio – all of our constituents – that we, the people they elected to represent them, will always look out for their best interests, and will stand up for them when they have been taken advantage of, as they were in this case. I will now turn the floor over to my co-sponsor, Senator Kunze, for her remarks.

**Senator Kunze:**

Senate Bill 346 is a repeal of House Bill 6 passed earlier this General Assembly. All aspects of the enrolled version of House Bill 6 would be repealed. This committee dedicated many hours of work into hearings on House Bill 6 and trying to improve the bill that we received from the House. I appreciate all the work that you all put into these hearings. I believe that knowing what we do now about the beginnings of House Bill 6 and the corruption behind its introduction in the Ohio House, it is imperative that we repeal House Bill 6. Regardless of the end result and the improvements made by this committee, a repeal of House Bill 6 will help to restore the faith of the public in the legislative process.

Not only were the scales weighted in favor of House Bill 6 from the backroom dealings made by those currently under investigation by the FBI, but the public effort to bring House Bill 6 up for a referendum was sabotaged by those behind the creation of House Bill 6. We have seen and heard from the FBI that illegal and unethical tactics were used to interfere with the gathering of signatures to bring House Bill 6 before the people of Ohio. I have heard from many of my constituents of their frustration at this silencing of their democratic voice.

Chair Wilson and members of the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee thank you again for allowing us to present sponsor testimony today on SB 346. We urge your favorable consideration of it, and would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.