



Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Dear Chair Schuring, Ranking Minority Member O'Brien, and members of the Ohio Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee:

Founded in 1884, the Columbus Chamber is the leading voice of business within the 11-county Columbus Region (Franklin, Delaware, Union, Fairfield, Licking, Knox, Logan, Madison, Morrow, Marion, Pickaway), representing more than 2,000 members employing over 500,000 workers, across all industry sectors and sizes.

We believe the Chamber can stay true to our mission of helping all businesses grow and flourish through our four pillars of work, while also supporting change and being part of relevant and much-needed conversations. Black Lives Matter to the Columbus Chamber and our members. Earlier this year, we formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council to advance racial justice and equality. The Chamber has chosen to prioritize public policies that help to achieve this goal, and Senate Bill 334 aligns with those efforts.

S.B. 334 will establish the nineteenth of June as Juneteenth, a legal holiday for which government employees receive paid leave. By doing so, we hope it will encourage the private sector to consider doing the same. Indeed, for 2021 and beyond, Juneteenth was made an official holiday of our Columbus Chamber of Commerce.

We recognize the emancipation of the last remaining enslaved African Americans, more than two years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. Additionally, we make a statement to our employees, our member businesses, and the community at large that the Columbus Chamber supports racial equity not just on June 19, but every day.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for S.B. 334. We respectfully request the committee, and the full legislature's support and advancement of the legislation.

Sincerely,

Holly Gross
Vice President, Government Relations