



Sponsor Testimony

State Representative Brian Baldrige

House Bill 107

Chairman Stein, Vice-Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 107. This bill designed to modernize current statute to increase safety, transparency, and accountability in the operation, installation, and ongoing maintenance of elevators throughout the state.

Elevators and escalators are some of the most commonly used forms of transportation in America, and most people do not give their personal safety a second thought when using them. Public safety is the top concern for both the elevator manufacturers and the mechanics who install them, and that is why both groups have joined together to support this important bill. All elevators in every public building provide convenience and also serve as part of the life safety system—a fact recognized by management and labor alike.

For the average person working in the Riffe Center, they drive to work once and then ride elevators and escalators several times per day as they go to meetings, get lunch, and go to the statehouse. One trip from the Riffe Center to the Statehouse requires an elevator ride, potentially two escalator rides and maybe another elevator ride depending on where the meeting is in the Statehouse. The return trip will include the same number of rides on conveyances. This pattern is repeated by legislators and staff several times every day. Personal safety at each point is taken for granted.

In Ohio, we have a robust system to inspect elevators. The Division of Industrial Compliance has a team of elevator inspectors that have the highest level of training available and the state is well served by their performance. This bill addresses what happens between inspections.

Unlike most other states, Ohio does not have a system to license the mechanics who install and maintain elevators and other conveyances. The goal of this bill is to require elevator mechanics to be licensed by the state of Ohio and creates the following regulatory framework:

- The bill applies to all mechanics working on elevators accessible to the general public.



- The bill requires Elevator Mechanics to complete a training program recognized by the US Department of Labor, there are two:
 - o National Elevator Industry Educational Program (NEIEP) which is offered to members of International Union of Elevator Constructors (IUEC).
 - o Certified Elevator Technician (CET) which is offered to individuals who are not IUEC members and do not intend to join the building trade.
- Both training programs require an apprenticeship program that allows mechanics to learn under the supervision of a licensed mechanic while earning a living.
- The bill exempts residential elevators, a compromise that was reached with the Ohio Realtors Association which led to the Association's neutral stance on the bill.
- The bill places the regulation in the Division of Industrial Compliance, where elevator inspectors currently reside.
- The bill allows the Division to charge a fee to cover the cost of the regulation.
- The bill creates an appeals process within the Board of Building Standards in the event an elevator mechanic is terminated.
- The bill grandfathers Ohio's active workforce into the regulatory scheme as well as workers who meet the same standards in other states.
- The bill allows for special privileges for apprentices during emergencies.
- The bill requires continuing education.

Conveyances in modern buildings are extremely complicated engineering systems. They are also in integral part of the daily lives of building tenants and public safety. In an emergency situation, firefighters and others need and expect the elevators to work and to have their safety features functioning properly. This bill will bring Ohio in line with most



other states, protect the public and protect emergency services by filling a glaring gap in our elevator regulations.

Chairman Stein, Vice-Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to stand before you today and I would be glad to answer any questions.