



Ohio Restaurant Association Testimony in Support of H.B. 168

March 10, 2021

Chair Edwards, Vice-Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch and Members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee:

On behalf of Ohio's 23,000 restaurant and foodservice locations and Ohio's 585,000 restaurant and foodservice employees, the Ohio Restaurant Association appreciates the opportunity to support H.B. 168.

Nearly one year removed from the onset of the pandemic and the resulting restrictions on Ohio businesses, many are just now beginning the path to recovery. While there is more hope amongst Ohio's business community than at any time since the pandemic began, for many sectors the path back is long and there is no certainty that all of Ohio's businesses will survive.

By reopening and providing an additional appropriation for Ohio's small business grant relief program, this legislation will support many of Ohio's most struggling small businesses. This legislation also importantly recognizes the unique challenges of those businesses that opened amidst this ongoing crisis and took a chance on Ohio's future economic recovery.

Additionally, this timely legislation recognizes that indoor entertainment venues are another sector of Ohio's economy that struggled significantly and have a long path to recovery. Importantly, it is not just these venues that will benefit from this support, but the myriad other small businesses that operate nearby rely on their strength to thrive as well. They are also important to the vibrancy of our communities. Thank you for recognizing this.

In light of the significant and lingering public health and economic crisis wrought on our state by the COVID-19 pandemic, this legislation is an important and necessary part of Ohio's economic recovery.

Thank you again for the opportunity to support this important legislation and for all you are doing to help Ohio and Ohio's businesses on this important road to recovery.

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Ohio Restaurant Association