



Written Testimony on House Bill 168

House Economic & Workforce Development Committee

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Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the committee, my name is Marty McGann, and I am the Senior Vice President of Advocacy & Strategic Initiatives for the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP). Thank you for the opportunity to offer our members' views on House Bill 168, legislation that would provide grants to businesses, local fairs, childcare providers, and veterans homes.

The mission of the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP), as you know, is to mobilize private sector leadership, expertise and resources to create jobs and leverage investment to improve the economic vitality of Northeast Ohio. We are a non-partisan, member-driven organization serving more than 12,000 small, mid-market and large companies across Northeast Ohio. We continually engage our members to define and advocate for public policies that allow for a healthy environment for businesses and entrepreneurs.

GCP was extremely supportive of the Ohio small business grant program businesses were previously eligible for, offering crucial relief in the middle of a worldwide pandemic. Our members are equally supportive of HB 168 as the legislation proposes \$150 million to continue that relief for small businesses from prior eligibility. In addition, \$10 million in funding support would be made available to businesses that were not eligible for previous business grants.

The bill would also allocate \$20 million to support our theaters and entertainment venues. This assistance is more important than ever and will aid Ohio's job creators and communities at a time when it is needed the most.

Predictability and stability are key factors to consider as the business community continues to navigate an uncertain environment related to the coronavirus pandemic. Ohio must have strong economic development tools to bolster support for Ohio-based companies and create the conditions for recovery. The proposals above will help foster a strong, vibrant business community in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our members' perspectives. We look forward to working with you.