



Written Testimony on House Bill 169

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' perspectives on House Bill 169, legislation that would provide grants to bars and restaurants and the lodging industry.

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 greatly appreciates many of the Executive Budget proposals that were included in the separate two-year state budget bill, House Bill 110, and we are supportive of the \$460 million in grant proposals that would aid small businesses, new businesses, bars and restaurants, lodging facilities, and indoor entertainment venues.

Our members are also encouraged and grateful for House Bill 169 which would appropriate \$125 million for Fiscal Year 2021 to the Development Services Agency (DSA) to provide grants to bars, restaurants, and lodging businesses impacted by the pandemic. Under the bill, \$100 million of the appropriation must be used by DSA to provide grants to impacted bars and restaurants and \$25 million must be used by DSA to provide grants for impacted lodging industry businesses.

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.