

## Ohio General Assembly

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## Committees

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State Representative, District 71

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### HB 168 Sponsor Testimony, Finance

Good afternoon Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley and members of House Finance, for hearing HB 168. HB 168's goal is simply to support our citizens in need with existing funding. The areas of focus for this proposed legislation are new businesses, small businesses, local fairs, indoor entertainment venues, child care providers, and veteran's homes.

In supporting our new businesses, we propose \$10 million in funding support to businesses that were not eligible for previous business grants. This is a new program formed during the pandemic, and will begin providing the appropriated assistance January 1st. Additionally, we are proposing a \$150 million to continue relief for small businesses. During the pandemic, we have seen a trend in consumer spending in which Ohioans are spending more of their money locally. We believe the new, and small business grants will bolster our state's businesses, and help provide economic security in the post-pandemic economy. These grants will be allocated from existing funds, as tax revenue from 2020 has seen an increase. It is paramount to use our money to make an investment in ourselves, and help our people now, instead of using carryover balances for much needed assistance.

One of Ohio's cornerstone industries that has suffered greatly during the pandemic are indoor entertainment venues. In this proposed legislation, we would allocate \$20 million to support our theaters, and entertainment venues. Saving our stages is not only important to our state's economy, our local theaters and music venues are a source of pride and culture for our communities. Commonly I hear from my constituents that they cannot wait to return to their favorite venues, and with this assistance we can help ensure their venues have not disappeared.

Thank you Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley and Members of the House Finance Committee. Representative Loychik and I would be happy to take any questions.