



May 30, 2022

HB 687 Proponent Testimony

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Plummer, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 687. My name is Elise Geig, President of Capitol Edge Consulting and I represent the Gahanna Historical Society here in Franklin County. On behalf of The Gahanna Historical Society, I respectfully request funding in the FY23-24 Capital Improvement Budget in the amount of \$203, 700.

The Gahanna Historical Society, begun in the 1960's, has preserved three historical buildings and the surrounding gardens. The Gahanna Historical Society provides an educational program annually for all third graders in the Gahanna Jefferson School system to learn of the early settlers, their struggle to survive and thrive, and the amenities that made up their lifestyle.

The Gahanna Historical Society owns four adjacent buildings on South High Street in Gahanna. The property lies upon the banks of the Big Walnut Creek and is visited by school groups, tourists, and residents. The Log House and the Clark House are Museums. The Lily Stone Bed and Breakfast is a historic home that provides an income to the non-profit Historical Society. The Carriage House is the maintenance and storage facility. The Historical Society expects to have a local one room schoolhouse reconstructed on its property in the Fall of 2022.

The Society buildings need major repairs.

-The Clark House Museum requires a replacement porch on the north side of the building. It requires an awning to protect the south meeting room entrance. The building needs to be painted. The roof needs to be replaced.

-The Log House requires an historic porch roof on the south side of the building. This will protect the log structure from decay.

-The Lily Stone Bed and Breakfast, a 1910 house, requires the lower siding to be removed, the log sill plates evaluated and replaced as needed. The wall studding needs to be reviewed for structural damage by termites and replaced as needed. New siding needs to be added and the House painted.

The Gahanna Historical Society is largely funded through local fundraising. The annual 2022 expected income is a total of \$22,125.00 generated from membership dues, donations, the annual Mill Street Market, and revenue from the Lily Stone B&B. The projected expenses for continued restoration, building maintenance and repair and ongoing operation expenses is \$19,775.00. we do not have matching funds set aside for capitol improvement projects. All building repairs and maintenance are funded through the operating budget.

Additionally, 2,400 hours of citizen volunteer time is dedicated to these activities. This income helps us carry out the mission of preserving our early history and providing educational programs regarding that history.

** The Historical Society suffered a loss in revenue because of COVID as did many small businesses. The Mill Street Market is the Gahanna Historical Society's largest annual fundraiser and was cancelled last year due to COVID. Also, the Lily Stone B&B saw a decline in guests due to less people traveling. The 2022 projected income assumes the return of the Mill Street Market in the fall and increase of guests/visitors to the Lily Stone B&B.

The state capital funding received would be used to continue the restoration and preservation of these very important historic buildings to provide our community a foundation of where we came from and who we are.

The Society's mission statement is, "A Forward Look with a Backward Glance". We continue to look forward as new opportunities for funding become available. The Society, generation after generation, is the focal point of the Gahanna community.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit proponent testimony in support of HB 687. We look forward to working with the State and encourage the members of this committee to grant our request of \$203,700 to help support the preservation and history of the City of Gahanna.