



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

State Representative Jay Edwards

House Bill 101 Sponsor Testimony

Thank you Chairman Stoltzfus, Vice-Chair Dean and Ranking Member Brown for giving us this time today to provide sponsor testimony for this very important bill, House Bill 101.

House Bill 101 would not only establish a County Jail Construction Funding Formula, but it would incorporate safe and efficient county jails throughout Ohio by helping counties manage the construction, expansion, renovation and repair of jail facilities.

This is a common-sense piece of legislation that would work to benefit county jails across Ohio.

Southeast Ohio is a place that is near and dear to my heart.

I grew up there as a kid, spent my young adult years learning there and continue to live there and represent its citizens as I fight for them and our communities.

Just last month, the Meigs County Jail in my district was forced to permanently close its doors.

The jail only had the capacity to hold 5 inmates at a time, but the county averages 16-18 inmates at a time.

This is clearly an issue because county officials were forced to house inmates outside of the county, taking the sheriffs away from their duties in their home county.

If House Bill 101 would have been in place, the Meigs County Jail would have had sufficient funding available from the state of Ohio to expand and create a comfortable housing situation for all inmates.

Without help from us at the state level, counties will continue to struggle to keep their jails running in a harmless and effectual manner, if they're able to even operate their own county jail at all.

I believe that it our job as leaders of our communities to stand up for them and fight for what they deserve and right now, our communities deserve safe and capable county jails.

House Bill 101 makes for a better livelihood of Ohio's county jail inmates and safer conditions for Ohio's county sheriffs.

Last week we held a press conference for this legislation and my joint sponsor and I were joined by 5 county sheriffs who all voiced their support for this legislation, which, in my opinion, speaks volumes.

Chairman Stoltzfus, Vice-Chair Dean and Ranking Member Brown, thank you again for allowing us to provide sponsor testimony on this imperative legislation that would make Ohio's jails safer and more efficient.

We are happy to take any questions at this time.