



## **Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council**

**41 South High Street | Suite 2325 | Columbus, OH 43215**

June 8, 2021

Rep. Scott Wiggam, Chairman  
State & Local Government Committee  
Ohio Statehouse  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: HB 203

Chairman Wiggam, Vice-Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly:

Please be advised that the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council (“OSBCTC”) represents approximately 100,000 union construction journeypeople and apprentices – men and women who put on a hard hat each day and work in every county across Ohio.

The OSBCTC currently represents 137 local construction union affiliates across the state. Our members are union plumbers and pipefitters, electricians, sheet metal workers, boilermakers, bricklayers and tile setters, cement masons and plasterers, elevator constructors, insulators and asbestos workers, finishing tradespeople, craft laborers, roofers and waterproofers, sprinkler fitters, and iron workers. Ohio’s Building Trades invest over \$50 million annually in tuition-free, paid apprenticeship programs, which provide college-level instruction and OTJ training for the next generation of union construction workers.

Please be advised that the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council is opposed to HB 203 due to the bill's negative impact on Ohio's construction industry.

Every Spring, our industry commemorates International Workers’ Memorial Day in honor of the tradespeople who have lost their lives on the jobsite. We know that the loss of even one worker is too many. As a result of our members’ intensive apprenticeship and safety training – along with Ohio's reasonable licensing requirements



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for specific crafts – the Ohio Building Trades lead our industry in safety on large-scale industrial construction and facility-maintenance projects.

I'm originally a UA plumber-pipefitter – I started out building and maintaining industrial facilities in the Lima region. After 20 years in the field, I will tell you: Construction is dangerous work. What happens in this General Assembly can either protect working Ohioans or put them at grave risk. Legislation like House Bill 203 – which allows uncertified, under-trained workers on *any* stage of a construction project – puts Ohio construction tradespeople at risk.

The Ohio Building Trades Regional Councils and local unions are committed to worker and public safety – as evidenced by numerous national recognitions for the safe completion of large-scale industrial projects. Our signatory agreements with reputable contractors uphold the highest industry safety standards, reducing the risks to public and private project owners associated with workplace injuries/fatalities.

I have been to the funerals of workers killed on construction jobsites. The loss of even one tradesperson causes deep devastation to their family, their workplace, and their community. I urge you to reject this dangerous bill.

House Bill 203 will flood Ohio with unlicensed or inadequately licensed out-of-state contractors to take work from Ohio-based companies, putting Ohio construction workers' lives and livelihoods at risk.

For these reasons, the Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council strongly opposes HB 203.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Michael Knisley

Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Ohio State Building & Construction Trades Council