

**House Bill 157 Written Opponent Testimony
House Ways and Means Committee, March 10, 2021**

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Riedel, Ranking Member Sobecki and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to HB 157.

The Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber represents nearly 4,000 businesses across Southwest Ohio, Southeast Indiana, and Northern Kentucky. Our work includes a commitment to grow and retain a 21st century workforce and stimulate economic development in our region with a vision for future growth. The provisions contained in HB 157 would decimate the growth and development of geographic job hubs throughout our state and hinder the drivers of our state's economy—our metropolitan centers.

HB 157 creates a permanent solution to a problem that is temporary. The legislation places hardships on Ohio's employers and lacks the clarity that cities and businesses need to ensure that the door is not open for income tax refund requests that cities did not budget for ahead of this pandemic. It is imperative that the legislature remove any uncertainty for employers as we begin our economic recovery and begin to see a light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel. Forcing businesses to track where employees are working and remit the appropriate taxes to an untold number of taxing authorities would place an undue burden on already strained employers who are fighting to bring their employees back to work in a safe manner.

Our cities will bear the brunt of HB 157. Changing the current rules regarding income tax collection would cost the City of Cincinnati \$18 million per year out of the city's general fund. These are dollars that have already been allocated to essential city services. The passage of this bill will come directly at the expense of public safety and basic services in Cincinnati. This will have a direct negative effect on the quality of life for citizens and businesses throughout the city. These effects will be felt in municipalities across our state that are home to a large number of employers. Ohio is the land of opportunity for entrepreneurs and business owners and these employers drive our state's economy. Their existence in Ohio is not something to take for granted. HB 157 may play a key role in driving employers from our state.

We urge the members of this committee to establish a collaborative process by which experts and stakeholders can work together to understand the long-term economic impacts of remote work for employers and cities.

Please reach out to me at 513.579.3120 or keagan@cincinnati-chamber.com if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued commitment to the success of our region.

Sincerely,



Katie Eagan
Vice President, Government Affairs