

May 18, 2021

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE  
HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE  
PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON H.B. 157

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Riedel, Ranking Member Sobecki, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written remarks on H.B. 157, a bill that deals with how remote workers should pay municipal income taxes.

By way of background, the Ohio Business Roundtable (OBRT) was established in 1992 for one sole purpose: to improve Ohio's business climate. Since its inception, the OBRT has worked with Ohio's governors and legislative leaders to make Ohio more business-friendly and more competitive both nationally and internationally. The Roundtable is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization comprised of chief executive officers of many of Ohio's largest, most successful companies. Because of the collective expertise and insights of OBRT members, the Roundtable is uniquely capable of bringing solutions to improve Ohio's economic vitality and ensure that Ohio remains the ideal state in which to live, work and succeed.

In regard to H.B. 157, the top concern from our members has been and continues to be the need to extend provisions of Sec. 29 of HB 197 to the end of the calendar year, Dec 31, 2021. This will avoid the added complications of concluding Sec. 29 mid-tax year and will provide greater certainty for businesses as they prepare for 2022 and beyond. We applaud the committee for addressing this concern and stand ready to work with interested parties to find a long-term solution on comprehensive municipal tax reform.

As you know, the Ohio Business Roundtable previously testified in opposition to an earlier version of this bill. However, over the past couple months, the Chairman and members of the committee have made a good-faith effort to work with interested parties and stakeholders to improve the bill. From the perspective of our members, the current sub bill text is an improvement over its previous form,

and we commend members of this committee for their diligent work on this important issue.

Although this bill has improved, OBRT still believes that Ohio's employers should not be put in between local governments and the employee with respect to a request for a refund. Some of our members have voiced that there should be more clarity around the issue, and we maintain the belief that the best course of action is to remove the employer's involvement in the refund process altogether. We do appreciate the committee's efforts to explicitly claim the employer does not need to certify exactly where the employee worked during the pandemic, other than to certify they were not at the employer's principal place of work.

Chairman Merrin and members of the committee, thank you for listening to our concerns. We believe the sub bill has improved in a way that no longer warrants our opposition, and we look forward to working with Ohio's elected representatives to ensure OBRT members receive adequate clarity around the issue of refunds.

Sincerely,

Michael McLean  
Vice President of Policy  
Ohio Business Roundtable