



Senators Steve Huffman and Mark Romanchuk
Senate Finance Committee
March 9, 2021
Senate Bill 108

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for having us here today to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 108, which would provide grants to bars, restaurants and the lodging industry throughout Ohio.

It's no secret the challenges that all Ohioans and businesses in our great state have faced this past year. The hospitality industry has been no exception. Our bill is simple and straight forward: it gets money in the hands of these businesses that so desperately need the funds.

SB 108 allocates 125 million dollars for fiscal year 2021 to provide grants to bars, restaurants and the lodging industry impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, under this bill 100 million dollars would be allocated for grants to bars and restaurants with the remaining 25 million allocated towards grants for the lodging industry.

Grants would be awarded in 3 tiers: \$10,000 / \$20,000 / and \$30,000. Grants awarded to bars and restaurants would be based upon factors such as demonstrated loss of revenue and the number of employees eligible bars and restaurants employ. While the grants for Lodging would be based upon factors such as a demonstrated loss of revenue and occupancy rates.

It is imperative that we get these grants out to these businesses as soon as possible. With many of these businesses experiencing record losses in revenues and cutting employment in an effort to stay afloat – the grants can serve as a bridge that many of these business can use to keep the lights on and retain employees.

During the height of business closures more than 29,000 of Ohio's direct hotel jobs were lost as well as another 86,000 supported jobs, of which 40% of the hotel workers are still not back to work.

We look forward to working with the Senate Finance committee on a speedy consideration and favorably passage of the bill to get these funds out to the hardworking Ohioans as soon as possible.

We thank you again for your consideration and would be happy to address any questions the committee may have.