



Senator Vernon Sykes Senate District 28

Committees:

- Ranking Member -Finance
- Ranking Member- Small Business and Economic Development
- Finance- Primary and Secondary Education
- Local Government and Elections
- Controlling Board

Chairman Dolan, Vice-Chair Gavarone, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 148.

This legislation establishes the New African Immigrants Grant and Gift Fund, which allows the New African Immigrants Commission to receive grants, gifts or appropriations from the General Assembly. These resources will be used to unite and disseminate information concerning people from sub-Saharan Africa.

The New African Immigrants Commission was created in the 127th General Assembly with the objective to advise the Governor, General Assembly, and state agencies on policies focusing on the special issues and needs of Ohio's African immigrant population. Currently, the New African Immigrants Commission represents a constituency of over 69,000 new Ohioans from more than 39 counties. Senate Bill 148 is necessary because it creates a fund in the state treasury for the commission to receive grants and gifts used to promote immigrants' self-sufficiency by connecting them to state, nonprofit, and private programs and services.

Thank you again for allowing me to give sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 148. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.