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Good morning, Chairman Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Senate Local Government & Elections Committee.

My name is Linda Eichenberger, Director of Unified Purchasing Cooperative of the Ohio River Valley in Southeast Ohio. I am here representing my Board of Directors, which is comprised of public-school superintendents, treasurers, and business managers. Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony regarding SB 260.

Unified Purchasing Cooperative is a Council of Government (COG), a non-profit organization, and a member of Ohio Council of Educational Purchasing Consortia (OCEPC), a non-profit organization comprised of the six (6) Ohio cooperatives, all of which are Councils of Government.

- The changes to Senate Bill 260 would allow out-of-state purchasing cooperatives, some of which are for profit, to potentially bypass 'construction services bid requirements' as outlined in Ohio Revised Code.
- These National Construction bids are not necessarily written to include Ohio Codes.
 - Eliminating the requirement for bid advertisements in local newspapers by these national purchasing cooperatives, makes it more difficult for Ohio companies to access Ohio construction contracts.
 - Individual schools and districts will need to verify that Ohio Codes are being met. This will cause extra paperwork and time - time that schools could be using for helping and teaching our children.
- Presently in Ohio, schools are currently using construction contracts that were bid and awarded within our non-profit framework for use of federal pandemic funds that have been made available to school districts and local governments for critical infrastructure and health and safety upgrades
- All OCEPC funds are used to support local Ohio schools. Last year alone \$80,000 of these funds helped member schools of the Unified Purchasing Cooperative. The funds raised by out-of-state purchasing cooperatives will not be returned to Ohio.

Unified Purchasing is supportive of all OCEPC members and their testimonies and strongly and respectfully urge you not to move forward with this legislation in its current form

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony to SB 260 and I will answer any questions you may have.

Linda S. Eichenberger

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Director, Unified Purchasing Cooperative of the Ohio Valley