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**Sponsor Testimony- Senate Bill 291**  
**Ohio Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee**  
**March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

Chairman Rulli, Vice Chairman Lang, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 291.

Senate Bill 291 establishes a veteran-owned business enterprise certification program under the Department of Development. It also expands the eligibility criteria for set-aside programs currently available to certified minority business enterprises. That includes certified women-owned and certified veteran-owned business enterprises. They will all be collectively defined in Senate Bill 291 as disadvantaged business enterprises.

Senate Bill 291 also makes certified women-owned and veteran-owned business enterprises eligible for contract purchases set aside by the Department of Administrative Services and other state agencies.

This bill creates equal opportunity for disadvantaged small businesses in Ohio when applying for these contracts with state agencies by extending the eligibility for contract purchases to other disadvantaged business enterprises previously exclusive to minority-owned businesses. This increases economic development by supporting more small business across Ohio.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony for Senate Bill 291.