

Opponent Testimony by Seanna D. Jackson on Senate Bill 158  
Government Oversight Committee  
October 10th, 2023

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present opponent testimony on SB 158. My name is Seanna D. Jackson and I am writing to oppose the passage of Senate Bill 158.

Cleveland voters deserve their right to vote on Issue 38 in November. Just like Clevelanders, voters in every municipality in Ohio deserve the opportunity to vote on local, citizen-led ballot initiatives. SB 158 infringes on that right.

Clevelanders need another way to get what needs to be done, done. Current operations does not benefit a progressive and safe city. Tell me how, a landbank owns all the houses, but the carpentry skilled person living next door to a delipated landbank property, cannot own the home, cannot be cleared to repair it, get money to repair it nor house his homeless family member with it? Because Cleveland's budget or operations current way is not for the people, it works for corporations. IT WORKS FOR THE WEST SIDE.

People with lived experiences, with dedicated solutions are not even at the table, when decisions are made that concern the people. The red tape, clique and bureauracracy is extrodinary. The budget is but one start for participating. A decision was recently made from a councilman for youth curfew, where was the resident vote or input? Emergency spending was done over the last few years, where was the peoples input on what the emergency was, that required city to spend money on the contracts? Animals and Bikes have had more money spent on them, when these dilapitated homes can decrease homelessness and set boundaries for the out of state property owners who are discriminating. The Participatory Budget would give us City of Cleveland Residents at least a table to sit at. Whatever process they say they have in place for inclusion, is not for all, it isnt publicized and public comment is NEVER considered, well maybe on the WESTSIDE where all economic development money goes. A councilman declared RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS. And it is. I am between generations, 40 and over and 40 and younger and I have seen it, experienced it, and have been employed by RACISM. What has been is not working. People have a right to be heard regarding money, having left all decisions to "public servants" to make decisions without us, has been a heavy detriment to this city, its progression and is the very core of the east side issue. The solutions are living in our community and need funding to carry out the work. The safety, the environment(air/water), recreation, all of it needs public participation, because those people in power only make decisions for corporations. We need public participatory budget as a new practice of accountability in Cleveland, the current budget operations, lead us to what we have now. Which sucks. This change is needed, now.

Sincerely,  
Seanna D. Jackson