

HB 184 Sponsor Testimony – Representative Sean Patrick Brennan (14 - Parma)

Chairwoman John, Vice-Chairman Dean, and members of the Ohio House of Representatives Standing Committee on State and Local Government.

While serving on Parma City Council for 19 years, one of the complaints I would often receive from residents and business owners in Ohio's seventh largest city was the proliferation of donation collection receptacles. Mayor Timothy DeGeeter, Safety Director Bob Coury, and several members of Parma City Council have expressed to me that this issue has not abated.

This is not only a problem in Parma, but throughout the state of Ohio. In fact, as one travels throughout our state, it is common to find multiple receptacles on one property, sometimes close to or in the public right-of-way. In my experience, frequently these often unsightly bins, that are very difficult to move, given their size and weight, would show up without the property owner's permission.

While the concept of donation collection bins is undoubtedly noble, there are compelling reasons why Ohio should take steps to regulate them.

First and foremost, unregulated donation collection receptacles pose a risk to public safety. These receptacles can become magnets for illegal dumping and are often overflowing, turning our streets and neighborhoods into eyesores. Improperly maintained bins can also pose safety hazards, such as blocking the public right-of-way, collapsing, or spilling over, endangering both pedestrians, bicycle riders, and drivers. By implementing standards, Ohio can ensure that these receptacles are properly maintained and do not become blights on our communities.

Secondly, unregulated donation bins can be exploited by unscrupulous operators. Some individuals and organizations have been known to use these bins for profit rather than charitable purposes. Without oversight, it is challenging to ensure that donated items truly benefit those in need. Regulation can establish transparency requirements and enforce compliance, ensuring that donations genuinely serve their intended charitable purposes.

Furthermore, these unregulated bins can create an unfair advantage for dishonest operators over legitimate charitable organizations - literally *boxing out* good actors, like Goodwill Industries, who I think you will hear from in proponent testimony. When unscrupulous operators deceive donors, it undermines trust in the entire charitable sector. By regulating donation collection receptacles, Ohio can level the playing field, protecting the interests of reputable nonprofits, and ensuring that donations reach those who genuinely need them.

In conclusion, Ohio must take action to regulate donation collection receptacles for the sake of public safety, transparency, and fairness. By doing so, we can strike a balance between encouraging charitable giving and safeguarding our communities. Let us work together to ensure that the spirit of generosity in our great state benefits those who truly need it and protects the integrity of our neighborhoods. I want to thank my colleague, Representative Bird, for working together on this important piece of legislation. I urge you to support House Bill 184. Thank you.