



OHIO SENATE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

June 6, 2023

Written Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 111

Chair Schaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Ohio Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony regarding the Ohio Municipal League's position on Senate Bill 111, legislation aimed at allowing for more farming and agricultural uses in Ohio.

The bill makes changes such as creating the Urban Farmer Youth Initiative Pilot Program, allowing for an exemption on building standards to allow for temporary greenhouses, and ensuring that non-contiguous land that is farmed as one unit can continue to be valued at its current agricultural use value (CAUV).

These changes are fairly straightforward, but they all come with the goal of ensuring Ohio remains a leader in the agricultural space – no matter if the setting is urban, suburban, or rural.

The pilot program for the Urban Farmer Youth Initiative is particularly exciting, because many urban communities in the state suffer from food insecurity. By teaching agricultural skills to youth who participate in the program – and who are often most affected by the lack of access to healthy food – they will gain a better understanding of how food is grown and, in turn, experience a higher quality of life by growing food of their own.

From the perspective of municipalities, initiatives like this provide a continuity of care, leading to a higher quality of life in the everyday experiences of their residents. Furthermore, aspects of this bill are permissive; local officials can continue to make decisions at the local level.

We appreciate the bill sponsor, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, for recognizing the need to address this issue that touches municipalities and their residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 111.

Kent Scarrett
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Ohio Municipal League