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State Senator  
3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District

**Committees:**

Judiciary – Vice Chair  
Community Revitalization  
Education  
Rules & Reference  
Workforce & Higher Education



**Vernon Sykes**  
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**Committees:**

Finance- Ranking Member  
Community Revitalization- Ranking Member  
Education  
Small Business and Economic Opportunity –  
Ranking Member

Chairman Dolan, Vice-Chair Cirino, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for giving Senator Sykes and I the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 54.

This legislation establishes an account in the state treasury for the New African Immigrants Commission. Currently, the New African Immigrant Commission is unable to receive funding in the forms of grants and gifts due to not having a state account. This is NOT an appropriation. This will allow the New African Immigrants Commission to receive grants and gifts used to promote immigrants' self-sufficiency by connecting them to state, nonprofit, and private programs and services. These resources are crucial to the advancement of the sub-Saharan African population in Ohio.

The New African Immigrants Commission was created in the 127th General Assembly with the objective to advise the Governor, General Assembly, and state agencies on policies focusing on the special issues and needs of Ohio's African immigrant population. Currently, the New African Immigrants Commission represents a constituency of over 69,000 new Ohioans from more than 39 counties. The Commission advocates for the development and implementation of policies and programs to address the needs of the state's sub-Saharan African population. The Commission also performs specific duties as listed in the law; including the creation of an interagency council to provide and coordinate the exchange of information relative to the needs of sub-Saharan African people and promote the delivery of state services to such people.

Thank you again for allowing us to give sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 54. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.