

Willow Watson
18212 Cornwall Rd
Cleveland, OH 44119

September 25, 2023

Dear Chairman Rulli and Ranking Member DeMora,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 158. My name is Willow and I am writing to oppose the passage of Senate Bill 158, a law that would prohibit participatory budgeting in Ohio.

As a Cleveland voter, I deserve the opportunity to vote on issues that matter most to me. Issue 38 in Cleveland is one issue that is important. SB 158 is an unfair attempt to strip Me and the other 32 Residents who would be affected by SB158 of their ability to decide for themselves on the question of creating a People's Budget. The process of participatory budgeting has been used in hundreds of cities around the United States as a form of civic education and engagement for residents to work with elected officials and city government to determine how their taxpayer dollars are spent. I believe issue 38 would help strengthen and revise the neighborhoods by creating programs that will help youth, elderly and other residents. Each neighborhood in Cleveland is unique and has their own set of issues that's why the participatory budget will be helpful and it would also help to recreate community.

People deserve to have a voice about how their community is run.

SB 158 prevents localities from addressing local problems. I strongly oppose SB 158.

Sincerely,

Willow