



**Senate Bill 158
Proponent Testimony
Marty McGann, General Counsel & Executive Vice President
Greater Cleveland Partnership
September 26, 2023**

Chairman Rulli, Vice-Chair Schuring, Ranking Member DeMora, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express our organization's support for Senate Bill 158.

My name is Marty McGann and I have the pleasure of serving as General Counsel and Executive Vice President at the Greater Cleveland Partnership.

Greater Cleveland Partnership is the region's leading economic development organization, and with over 12,000 members, the largest metropolitan chamber of commerce in the nation. We are powered by both the region's largest organizations as well as our small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Our mission is to accelerate growth and prosperity in the Cleveland Region. Our All-In strategy and plan is aimed at propelling the region to the top tier of peers in the Midwest in business, jobs, and income growth this decade. To get there, we work closely with partners across the civic system and have appreciated the support of this legislature and administration for policy that supports and amplifies growth in our region and state.

I am here to offer our organization's full support for Senate Bill 158, which when passed will restrict disbursement of municipal funds in manners that circumvent existing legislative and executive authority of city government.

City budgets in our region and across the state are already stretched. As has been widely reported, a proposed charter amendment in Cleveland would remove \$14M annually from City resources. It would use these funds to 1) pay a small committee of unelected leaders and 2) to fund projects of their interest.

We believe elected city representatives -- both council members and executives -- are best positioned to weigh funding priorities for their communities. They have the authority and responsibility to balance the requirements of public safety, municipal services, and other critical support for communities. Splitting off a percentage of the municipal budget to be allocated by an unelected group will make funding core city services more challenging.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to Senator Cirino for bringing this legislation forward. We encourage swift passage of Senate Bill 158.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.