

September 25, 2023

Ed George  
17603 Fernshaw Ave  
Cleveland, OH 44111

Dear Chairman Rulli and Ranking Member DeMora:

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 158. My name is Ed George, I am a resident of the City of Cleveland, and I am writing to oppose the passage of Senate Bill 158.

Cleveland residents deserve the opportunity to vote on Issue 38 in Cleveland. SB 158 is a blatant attempt to strip Clevelanders of their ability to decide for themselves on the question of Participatory Budgeting. SB 158 is not only undemocratic, but frankly flies in the face of the "home rule" that our republic is based on.

We have witnessed countless efforts, both nationally and within the State of Ohio, to impede and undermine democracy. I am not sure how we live up to the ideals our founders put forth if legislators essentially say 'you are important enough to elect your representatives, but not smart enough to make decisions beyond that point.'

Alleging that passing, or even having the ability to vote on, participatory budgeting will open some Pandora's box that cedes control from elected officials is insulting to me as a resident, taxpayer, and voter (in every election day in this state since I turned 18). If SB 158 passes I can honestly say it might be the proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back" regarding my continued residency in the state.

I strongly oppose SB 158, and would be happy to speak with any members of the committee in more details about my opposition.

Sincerely,

Ed George