

February 15, 2024
Kristen Beireis
215 Stanton Dr
Springboro, OH 45066

Dear Chairman Rulli, Ranking Member DeMora and members of the General Government Committee,

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 137. My name is Kristen Beireis, I am a resident of the City of Springboro. I am in marketing and I volunteer my time in pro-democracy efforts. Today, I am testifying to oppose the passage of Senate Bill 137.

In January, I will have lived in Springboro for 13 years. Having grown up in Wilmington, I enjoy the similar small town feel. With 19,000 residents and a smart government, I have marveled at our ability to balance business growth and residential development. We've grown faster than any of the communities around us and we've done it well. We pride ourselves on our highly graded schools. We also take pride in our historic downtown district along with more modern amenities that provide all we need to enjoy life without leaving town. My husband and I love our community because of these positives. Our local government has made smart decisions based on local needs.

My first concern with SB 137 is that it allows legislators at the statehouse, who don't know my community, to dictate local government decisions. Our state has had over 100 years of allowing communities to make our own decisions through Home Rule, which this bill undermines. I have provided testimony to my City Council about their decisions. That's my right to do so. I live there and I know more of what's going on than those of you in Columbus do. What you're talking about here is not even giving me or my community the option to consider how we want to run our city. This is the exact opposite of local control.

Republican [North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum](#) vetoed a similar Bill in his state saying; *"If we truly believe in limited government and local control, we can begin by honoring the boundaries, intent and spirit of home rule charters, especially when there is no evidence of any harm having occurred from trusting the residents of cities to have self-determination within the bounds of their home rule charters."*

My second concern is SB 137 denies local communities the ability to make their own decisions on the best way to vote. I have talked to neighbors about voting and I hear a lot of negative sentiment. Many feel like their leaders don't appeal to them to get votes. According to FairVote, [Ranked Choice Voting ensures broad support](#). If my community wanted to explore Ranked Choice Voting for this reason, I would want the opportunity to weigh in on whether it's appropriate for us. Under SB 137's financial penalty, the City Council would have a hard time bringing it forward to the citizens, because it would be costly, effectively banning Ranked Choice Voting.

Undermining home rule and dictating every community's voting process options is government overreach. I ask you to consider my testimony and vote NO on SB 137, because it undermines Home Rule. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kristen Beireis