

Good Morning/Afternoon:

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio and Members of the Transportation Committee

Thank you for allowing testimony today regarding my support of SB 155. My name is Mary Vantz and I am a 28 year resident of Brunswick.

Besides being a resident who will be impacted should the exchange at Rt 71 and Boston Rd. become a reality, I am the former Deputy Director of Medina County Job and Family Services. I am proud to have served the public for over 33 years. Those of us who have chosen to work in the public sector know the burden and the serious nature of the work we do. Most of the time it goes unnoticed and we carry on with our responsibilities. If we do our jobs well, the average citizen is unharmed, continues with their daily lives, and hopefully benefits from our efforts. Such is not the case with ORC 5501.6. You have already heard or will hear today from numerous individuals regarding the legalities and the data from several studies that this proposal is destructful to many homes/properties and self-serving to a select few. I would like to emphasize several key points. We are NOT antibusiness. We need businesses in our communities to provide employment and revenue. We are NOT anti-development. We are NOT living in a bubble expecting nothing to change. Change is needed to remain relevant in any healthy society.

What we are seeking is thoughtful, thorough and reasonable solutions. Our neighboring city, Strongsville has continued to build and overdevelop commercial areas with no long term planning or restraint. It has consumed virtually every bit of greenspace except for the Cleveland Metro park corridor which is legally protected and therefore cannot be developed. Due to their lack of strategic planning, many families will lose their homes and the list goes on... At what price is transportation of a product more valuable than someone's home? Is moving goods at a slightly faster pace more important than providing a quality home for your children? I think we all know the answer. Those of us here today represent a variety of backgrounds. We don't have all the answers, nor should we. Simply put, if your teeth hurt, you go to the dentist, if your car breaks down, you go to a mechanic. The people that created this problem need to own it and coordinate a team of appropriate professionals who can fix it without political affiliation or malice. If the exchange moves forward, it will adversely impact both Strongsville and Medina County. Brunswick will suffer in terms of quality of life and financial devastation. Please help us preserve what we have all worked so hard to keep. This issue is about us, but we don't want this to occur in any other community. Thank you for listening and considering our testimony. I implore you to pass SB 155. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.