

Ohio Senate
Transportation Committee
April 15, 2024
Testimony of Grant R. Aungst

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present this written testimony to express my support for the passage of Senate Bill 155 as introduced by Senator Mark Romanchuk. My name is Grant Aungst and I am the Community and Economic Development Director for the City of Brunswick. We are grateful and most appreciative for the time and efforts Senator Romanchuk has dedicated to the citizens of Brunswick.

Senate Bill 155 should be supported. It will support the many long-term community stakeholders and senior homeowners in the Boston Road area, who have worried for over a past year, over holidays, birthdays and anniversaries, about, will I have my home to come back to, or will it be taken for a poorly planned and executed highway interchange? How do you explain to the property owner, that the value of your home is not what the fair market will offer, but what the State will only be allowed to give you? Our community members are the heart and soul of the community, they deserve to be heard, and we heard them along with Senator Romanchuk, have you?

HB 23 was wrong to impose upon another community, by forcing them to face the problems of a community, brought upon them by their own planning. The report generated by Strongsville, showed that the impact in attempting to move the traffic from State Route 82 south, was minor at best. Based on this alone, one can surmise this is not the solution and may in fact create additional challenges not yet imaged with a one-sided study driven by a one-sided objective.

The primary wealth of an individual or family, is based on home ownership. As we know, normally the largest purchase in someone's life is their home. They invest in their home for the long term, for their safety, health and overall family welfare. In today's day and age, we are trying to build more homes. There is a housing shortage of millions of housing units. To put this interchange in, it will amplify the housing problem? These homeowners will need to replace their homes, many of them paid for, how do they do that, with interest rates higher than the past 20 years? Our community members put down roots as part of their home, they created wealth that they can save for and borrow from, they maintain the yard, plant flowers and trees. Perhaps they plant a tree every time they have a child or grandchild, and now that tree is in danger of not being part of the family or community. The home is also a gathering place, a place to tell stories and celebrate, a place to laugh and cry together, a place...to

call home. And it's a place to pass down from one family to another. This is what creates wealth, the owning of a home for a family.

Brunswick is primarily a residential community. With community neighborhoods, long term friendships and family ownership of homes. This proposed interchange, would forever damage that prospect of forever homes, family and friendships. I respectfully ask that you support Senate Bill 155 and the repeal of ORC 5501.60.