



Opposition Testimony for House Bill 138
February 17, 2026

Chair Miller, Vice Chair Hiner, Ranking Member Jarrells, and members of the Arts, Athletics and Tourism Committee:

My name is Michael Cooney, and I serve as Executive Vice President of Radius Hospitality. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 138.

Radius Hospitality is a full-service hotel ownership and management company headquartered in Copley, Ohio. Our Ohio portfolio includes eight properties located throughout Northeast and Eastern Ohio: the Holiday Inn Boardman, Holiday Inn Canton, Residence Inn by Marriott Fairlawn, Fairfield Inn by Marriott Streetsboro, Comfort Suites Youngstown North, Comfort Suites Hartville, Comfort Inn & Suites Dover, and Quality Inn Dover.

Like many Ohio hospitality businesses, our hotels already operate under a complex and substantial tax and fee structure. Every hotel stay in Ohio is subject to state sales tax, local sales tax, and lodging taxes at the county, municipal, or township level, along with additional charges such as special improvement district assessments, airport shuttle fees, and other required costs. These charges must either be passed on to guests or absorbed by hotel operators.

It is simply not accurate to suggest that additional mandatory charges have no impact on demand or profitability. Hotels operate in a highly competitive environment. Each added fee makes Ohio properties less attractive to travelers, meeting planners, and group organizers. While it is often noted that other states impose similar assessments, many of those destinations began with significantly lower tax burdens, allowing them to remain competitive even after additional charges were added. Ohio does not share that advantage.

In fact, Ohio already faces one of the highest combined lodging tax rates in the nation. Adding another mandatory charge at checkout would further increase the cost of visiting our state and weaken our competitive position against nearby markets such as Pittsburgh and Detroit, which aggressively pursue group business, conventions, and major events.

Affordability is a central concern for consumers today. Guests are increasingly frustrated by the growing number of taxes and fees added to purchases, particularly in travel. This has led to strong demand for upfront, all-in pricing—something our industry already practices. Any new mandatory charge will be immediately visible to consumers making travel decisions and will effectively signal that Ohio is a more expensive place to visit and stay. That does not encourage travel or hotel activity.

Investment, development, and expansion decisions are directly influenced by the overall business climate. Increasing taxes or assessments, or mandating participation in local tourism promotion districts against the wishes of hotel operators, does not improve Ohio's competitiveness or employment environment. Instead, it makes other states more attractive as we compete for tourism investment and economic growth.

Finally, there has been no clearly articulated justification for requiring mandatory participation by businesses that do not wish to be included. The inclusion of such language strongly suggests an awareness that many hotel operators oppose this proposal.

For these reasons, Radius Hospitality respectfully urges the Committee to oppose Substitute House Bill 138.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective.

Michael Cooney
Executive Vice President
Radius Hospitality