



**Representative Erika White**  
Sponsor Testimony: House Bill 284  
House Development Committee  
June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Thank you, Chair Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and distinguished members of the House Development Committee, for the opportunity to present to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 284, bi-partisan legislation that will uplift businesses and promote American made infrastructure. This legislation will require that state-funded projects be constructed using American-made iron and steel.

This legislation is a win for Ohio and the American economy at large. The bill invests in the state's economy. My district, Ohio's 41<sup>st</sup> district, covers a portion of Toledo. Toledo has had a long history of being a manufacturing epicenter for America. In the mid 1800's, Toledo was dubbed the name "glass city" because of the innovations in glass making that took place. One of these innovations included the production of flat glass. This was perfect as the automobile industry began to take off shortly after.

In the years to come, there was an increased need of automobiles, specifically Jeeps. The manufacturing of Jeeps has changed hands numerous times, but it is currently owned by Stellantis. As a result, the Jeep Wrangler and Gladiator are still manufactured at the Toledo Assembly Complex. This complex includes the original plant where the Jeep was manufactured in the 1940s. In addition to auto manufacturing, Toledo is home to a Cleveland Cliffs location. Cleveland Cliffs participates in steel making, tooling and stamping, and other services.

In Toledo specifically, Cliffs has a direct reduction plant. The plant produces hot-briquetted iron, or HBI, which is an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional iron methods. The facility has a low-cost production process, and the iron can be used for various furnaces, and is also sold to third parties.

Many of our districts have a longstanding manufacturing history that mirrors Toledo's. It is important that we create legislation that is reflective of the history of the districts we all represent. As a union member, and a champion for working class people, I will always be in favor of supporting local industries, re-investing in our communities, and creating more job opportunities.

As stated, before by my joint sponsor Rep Hiner, House Bill 284 is more than just the selection of materials; House Bill 284 represents a significant investment in Ohio's economic future and Ohio workers. It is a commitment to our skilled labor force...the working folks of Ohio, and a guarantee that the infrastructural foundations of our communities will be robust and enduring for generations to come. Made in American holds value in Ohio!

I respectfully urge you to support oh House Bill 284 as a significant piece of legislation that will have lasting benefits for our state and am happy to answer questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.