



**OHIO HOUSE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
H.B. 284, INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY
Presented on February 18, 2026 by
Andrea Ashley, VP Government Relations
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Chair Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Brownlee, and members of the Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on House Bill 284.

My name is Andrea Ashley, Vice President of Government Relations for the Associated General Contractors of Ohio (AGC), a statewide trade association representing commercial construction companies that build Ohio's public buildings, schools, healthcare facilities, wastewater treatment plants, and other vertical structures.

HB 284 requires that iron or steel products used state-funded public projects be produced in the United States. We thank the sponsors for introducing this legislation and the Committee for its thoughtful consideration.

AGC supports the use of American iron and steel on public construction projects. Our members work closely with domestic suppliers, build their facilities, and share the goal of strengthening American manufacturing.

AGC appreciates that H.B. 284 is not as expansive as the federal Build America, Buy America Act (BABA), as the implementation of BABA has proven to be extremely complex and challenging.

The updated federal requirements have been difficult to interpret and administer. The breadth of materials covered, layered agency guidance, and evolving compliance expectations have created confusion across the industry. In many cases, public owners and contractors have had to pursue waivers simply to move projects forward because domestic materials were not reasonably available or compliance documentation could not be obtained.

For H.B. 284, clarity and practicality are essential. It will avoid the compliance challenges experienced under federal procurement requirements and ensure the industry can reasonably comply—particularly given the bill's enforcement mechanisms and civil penalties.

As such, AGC strongly supports the inclusion of the proposed amendment AM 1678-1.

In addition to incorporating the long-standing “melted and poured” requirement, the amendment excludes steel operating equipment from the domestic requirement. This helps ensure contractors can comply using established and proven supply chains.

The operating equipment exclusion is necessary because finished operating equipment—such as pumps, generators, HVAC systems, and treatment units—often contain numerous components sourced from multiple manufacturers. It is not always feasible for a contractor to determine what percentage of an operating system was produced domestically, nor do contractors have access to proprietary sourcing data for complex equipment. Without this exclusion, contractors could face compliance obligations that are impractical to verify, and potentially subject them to liability despite good-faith efforts.

AGC thanks the Committee for adopting the amendment permitting waivers in cases of public interest, nonavailability, or when domestic sourcing would significantly increase project costs. Adoption of AM 1678-1 would further improve the bill by adding needed clarity and practicality. Clear standards help prevent disputes and compliance conflicts that can delay projects and drive up costs.

We understand that additional amendments to HB 284 may be under consideration.

Because this legislation directly impacts commercial contractors responsible for delivering public projects across the state, we respectfully request the opportunity to review and provide input on any future proposed changes.

In closing, AGC of Ohio supports domestic iron and steel requirements and respectfully urges inclusion of the amendment AM 1678-1 to ensure the construction industry can comply with confidence and keep building Ohio’s public projects.

Thank you for your time and consideration.