

House Finance Committee
Interested Party Testimony, House Bill 54 (Stewart)
Jason Warner, Director of Strategic Engagement, Greater Ohio Policy Center
Wednesday, February 19, 2025

Chairman Stewart, Vice Chairman Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 54, the state transportation budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027.

My name is Jason Warner. I am the Director of Strategic Engagement at the Greater Ohio Policy Center. GOPC is Ohio's leading advocate for urban revitalization and sustainable growth, advocating for policies that revitalize Ohio.

GOPC has been a longtime advocate for a modern transportation and mobility network across the state. We want that network to be safe and reliable for users of all modes. Additionally, we disseminate best practices, information on funding, tools, and technical assistance to develop transportation networks that create vibrant, revitalized spaces in the cities and towns of Ohio.

Comments on the Substitute Bill

We appreciate the work the House has done in crafting a transportation budget proposal that meets or exceeds what we see as needed investments. After reviewing Sub-HB54, we are pleased that the House has

- Retained the Governor's recommended allocation for safety programs, totaling over \$400M for the biennium
- Continued the Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program and provides \$15M in each fiscal year to administer the program
- Repeals language from HB23 (135th GA) that required the construction of entrance and exit ramps on I-71 in Medina County and permits a traffic congestion management plan for that area
- Adopts the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact, an important step for Ohio to work with other Midwest states to coordinate and support regional improvements to passenger rail service

Thank you for proposing investments that create an infrastructure system that gives Ohioans of all ages and abilities access to safe, reliable modes of transportation; and helps Ohio's communities continue to increase in vibrancy and livability.

Chairman Stewart and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony.