



Representatives Angie King & Kevin Miller

Ohio's 84th and 69th House Districts

Chair Oelslager, Vice Chair Pizzulli, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Financial Institutions committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 149, the Withholding Illegal Revenue Entering Drug Markets, or Ohio's WIRED Act. This bill targets illicit activity tied to international wire transfers, especially those linked to cartels, human smuggling, and drug trafficking.

Money wire transfers called "remittances" are predominately used by foreign nationals to send money abroad. Cartels exploit this system to launder money, move billions across borders, and finance criminal networks. They also flood our communities with fentanyl, killing tens of thousands of Americans each year. This is not a distant issue. It is happening now, and it threatens our families and communities.

House Bill 149 gives a practical, enforceable tool to fight back. It establishes a 3% remittance fee **on wire transfers sent from a customer in Ohio to recipients outside the U.S.. The party sending the money will pay this fee.** Wire transfers have long been exploited for illicit activity. Cartels use them to move small, hard-to-trace sums to Mexico. In one case, former Columbus residents linked to the Sinaloa Cartel conducted more than 300 wire transfers in just two and a half years. ¹Reports from the Mexican think tank Signos Vitales show that at least \$4.4 billion in ill-gotten gains has been electronically sent to Mexico as part of money laundering. ²

It's important to note that this legislation does not affect legitimate businesses transferring funds from one financial institution to another located outside of the U.S.

HB 149 has two clear goals: deter criminal activity and support law enforcement. Even capturing a fraction of these illicit transfers sends a message: Ohio will not allow criminals to profit at the expense of our citizens. Revenue from this fee will go directly

¹ [Curbing Cartel Cash Flow: Ohio's Fight Against Remittances | FAIRUS.org](#)

² [Think tank: over 7% of remittances may have organized crime ties](#)

to grants for local law enforcement, strengthening their efforts against drug trafficking, human smuggling, and other organized crime. Oklahoma has already seen success with similar legislation. Ohio can lead the nation with a model that is practical and effective.

Federal legislation like H.R. 1 has highlighted a major problem: billions leave the U.S. each year untaxed and untracked.³ Ohio families already fund schools, roads, and law enforcement. HB 149 follows the same principle, making sure money leaving our state also supports public safety. Instead of letting it flow unchecked, this bill turns it into a weapon against crime.

In closing, passing HB 149 sends a strong message: Ohio will not tolerate criminal exploitation. The funds collected will directly support local law enforcement to secure our communities and keep Ohioans safe. Since the Ohio Wired Act was introduced last general assembly, eight other states have followed our lead. This demonstrates that our approach is not only effective, but replicable nationwide.

HB 149 is a small but meaningful step with immediate impact. It is about public safety. It is about supporting the men and women in uniform who risk their lives every day to protect Ohioans.

Chair Oelslager, Vice Chair Pizzulli, Ranking Member Russo, and members of the House Financial Institutions committee, thank you again for the opportunity to provide Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 149, we are happy to answer any questions you have.

³ [US to levy 1% remittance tax: What it means for NRIs and students | Immigration News - Business Standard](#)