

Chairwoman King, Vice Chair Kishman, Ranking Member Sims, and members of the Local Government Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB113 on annexation reform.

My name is Michele Pfrogner. I am a 35-year resident of Bethel Township in Miami County. I live approximately 3½ miles from an imposing water tower that faces open farm fields to the north of Route 40, the National Road. The two words written on that tower are “Huber Heights,” which is a community of over 43,000 residents located in Montgomery County. With this water tower overlooking Bethel Township, Huber Heights obviously has big plans for its own future. And Bethel Township, without HB113, will have no voice.

Bethel Township has already faced one annexation from Huber Heights, with a second in the planning stages. Since the 2018-2019 school year, our formerly rural school system population has exploded by 22%. The new elementary building completed in 2023 is over capacity. As a 35-year veteran educator, I know that future “growth” to the Bethel Local School District is unsustainable. Cities that annex townships should be responsible for educating students within the new boundaries. HB113 will help correct the current injustice.

The mayor of Huber Heights has publicly stated that he wants to grow the population of his city to 51,000 or more to obtain more state funding. Bethel Township is an easy target for annexing more land to build more homes. Our 4,800 residents, without HB113, will again have no voice.

The words “general good” are used frequently throughout HB113. There is no “general good” involved with a Montgomery County city annexing a Miami County township. A city in one county should not have the right to encroach property lines in another county without due process. HB113 will help give Ohio counties a voice as annexation threatens boundaries.

I understand that individuals can sell their property to whomever they wish; however, when developers, particularly those that donate to a

city's mayoral reelection campaign, can offer up to 7 figures or more, financial gains speak louder than the "general good" of other residents now threatened by annexation.

Please approve HB113, so that counties, school districts, and residents of townships --residents like me---have a voice.

Thank you, Chairwoman King and committee members for hearing my testimony today. I truly appreciate the work you do for our state.