



**SENATE GENERAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 86 | MARCH 25, 2025**

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony on Senate Bill 86. As a bipartisan coalition of mayors in Ohio's largest cities and suburbs, we support your attempt to regulate these products, and would like to encourage you to consider including a permissive local retail license option in this bill.

The 31 cities that make up our bipartisan coalition collectively spend over \$2 billion annually on public safety. It is a long-established reality that law enforcement in Ohio is primarily a local endeavor, and ensuring that our communities are safe and our first responders are well equipped, well trained, and competitively compensated are our mayors' highest priorities. With that in mind, we believe that adding a local retail licensing and fees option to SB 86 would facilitate local communities' ability to promote, enforce, and preserve public safety, and would make the regulations the bill more effective, with a wider range of options for ensuring that local retailers are following the rules the General Assembly designs.

**Include an option in state law to allow local retail licensing and fees on a permissive basis**

Last year, the General Assembly inadvertently preempted local governments from enforcing local tobacco retail licenses ("TRLs") as part of a larger effort to preempt local tobacco regulation. We believe this was a mistake, and we offer the suggestion that this mistake can be remedied and addressed in concert with allowing for some **permissive** additional local regulatory control on intoxicating hemp products, as well as tobacco.

Adding an optional and limited provision that would allow local governments to choose to enact local retail licenses for businesses that sell tobacco and/or intoxicating hemp products would create an opportunity, should a local government choose, to establish a local regulatory scheme that would complement, rather than displace, state regulation of products that are dangerous and can be harmful to children. Such authority would also provide local governments with the authority to impose a modest local fee to **fund public safety enforcement of hemp and tobacco age restrictions**.

We believe that this proposal strikes a balance between ensuring statewide uniformity of the rules around sale, possession, and use of hemp and tobacco products, while allowing for some additional flexibility to ensure local enforcement and public safety resources remain available. We also believe that local enforcement, in cooperation with a state regulation scheme, will strengthen the law and reinforce the goals SB 86 sets out to achieve with regard to safety and protection of children and minors.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and for your ongoing collaboration with our cities and our local law enforcement agencies.