MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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Senate Bill 475 - State Motor Fuel Tax Holiday
Interested Party Testimony
September 29, 2026
Senate General Government Committee
William Murdock, Executive Director, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the proposed motor fuel tax holiday. My name is William Murdock; I am the Executive Director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

We are Central Ohio's regional council representing nearly 100 local governments and partner organizations across a 15-county region. Our communities span urban, suburban, and rural areas, comprising a broad cross-section of Ohioans. We provide the region and our local government members a variety of programs and services related to transportation, land use, data, sustainability, and economic development.

MORPC plays a pivotal role in transportation planning for our region. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), we are specially designated by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to carry out transportation planning for the Columbus urbanized area. We also house the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO), which is a designated Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) as recognized by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

We fully understand and appreciate the motivation behind this legislation. With motor fuel prices the highest they have been in recent memory, and contributing to higher prices on other goods downstream, Ohioans are much in need of relief from price inflation. With the costs of transportation, housing, groceries, and other essentials climbing, our residents need and deserve a break.

Simultaneously, investments in transportation infrastructure are vital to our economy, and to sustain economic growth and counter inflation in the long run, Ohio's transportation system has to be up to par. As you are all aware, the state motor fuel tax is a core component of transportation funding in our state. This funding ensures that our roads safely and efficiently transport Ohioans and the goods and services they care about.

Importantly, a substantial portion of state gas tax revenue goes directly to local communities. Transportation improvements often take our members years to fully plan, finance, and execute, and they provide crucial matching dollars to leverage other funding sources that make projects possible. Even a temporary pause in the flow of these funds could cause significant delays to critical projects years in the making, leaving known hazards in place, constraining economic and community development, and forgoing needed investments to move freight more efficiently.

If the Ohio General Assembly moves forward with suspending the state motor fuel tax, it must ensure that lost transportation revenue is fully backfilled, local governments are made whole, and projects continue to move forward on schedule. Any effort to provide temporary relief at the pump should not come at the expense of the

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Ben Kessler *Chair*
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Matt Starr *Secretary*

transportation system that Ohioans depend on to safely travel, commute, and conduct business. By keeping these programs fully funded, we can continue building on our economic development successes, keep residents safe on the road, and reduce costly freight and logistics delays that drive up the cost of living.

Chair Roegner and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.