



State Senator Mark Romanchuk
Senate Bill 31 Sponsor Testimony
Ohio Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee
February 25, 2025

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein, and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 31, a reintroduction of Senate Bill 155 from the 135th General Assembly, which passed the Senate 30-1. This bill seeks to remove the requirement for the Department of Transportation to construct certain interstate interchanges.

In the transportation budget for the 135th General Assembly, there was language included to construct an interchange off Interstate 71 at Boston Rd. in Brunswick. This is a mistake. This provision moved forward with strong opposition from local governments and without approval from the Metropolitan Planning Organization. In addition, this budget provision was passed before a traffic study had been completed. During the transportation budget testimony, members were told the interchange was necessary to reduce congestion and decrease crash frequency in the city of Strongsville. Since the passage of the transportation budget, a traffic study was published and, predictably, shows minimal improvement in alleviating congestion or improving safety. A letter dated September 15, 2023, from the Director of ODOT to the Governor states, “The study did not provide an obvious solution to reduce congestion and decrease crash frequency”.

The passage of this provision is dangerous and sets an unworkable precedent. The 123rd General Assembly recognized that legislators know nothing about transportation issues and created the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC). The TRAC language is located in Ohio Revised Code Section 5512.07 and the second sentence states, “No member of the general assembly shall be a member of the council”. Why did the general assembly include that sentence? It’s because members of the general assembly know nothing about transportation projects and, bring a political bias.

If this language is allowed to stay in the Ohio Revised Code, it will set the dangerous precedent that the General Assembly can legislate highway projects. This will, undoubtedly, lead to the waste of public dollars.

Thank you for your attention today and your support of this legislation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.