



**Proponent Testimony SB 30
Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee
Catholic Conference of Ohio
May 15, 2025**

Chair Cutrona, Vice Chair Romanchuk, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony today. My name is Dr. William Kuehnle, and I am an Associate Director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio. The Catholic Conference is the official voice of the Catholic Church in Ohio on matters of public policy, and we are pleased to support Senate Bill 30 to require retail merchants to accept cash as payment. We thank Senator Blessing and Senator Ingram for introducing legislation which defies partisan interests, seeking instead the proper end of politics: the common good.

The financialization of Ohio's economy this century has wounded our public life in many unseen ways. The reign of digital transactions penalizes frugality and elevates convenience as the principal feature of the marketplace. These are grave developments which SB 30 remedies by protecting those paying with cash under the Consumer Sales Practices Act.

Convenience is not the only reason many of us often find ourselves without cash. The drive of powerful financial institutions to commodify every area of human life has pushed many into an increasingly tenuous relationship with their local economies. The indigent, the pennywise laborer, or the retiree who knows all too well the caprice of wealth exchanged or generated virtually—these and many other Ohioans conduct their transactions by cash. SB 30 protects their place in our society.

Even those who are unfamiliar with the gospels can nevertheless recite the teachings of Jesus. For example, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." Jesus's instruction to give to Caesar what is Caesar's follows the observation that the currency minted by the Roman Empire in Jesus's time bore the physical impression of Caesar's face. Senate Bill 30 makes sure that all Ohioans seeking those things necessary for life—food, water, clothing, etc.—can render to Caesar what is Caesar's by requiring retailers to accept physical currency. This bill will also help Christians and others of good will to give to God what is God's, ensuring that an act of charity for the hungry in the form of a few dollars is not rendered useless in a market designed for expediency, not humanity.

There are not many opportunities for the legislature to contradict so directly an economic milieu of commodification and convenience. Senate Bill 30 is one such opportunity. In closing, I offer the observation of Pope Leo XIII, after whom our newly elected Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, selected his name. Pope Leo XIII says regarding the right to use one's earnings to acquire for our needs:

The preservation of life is the bounden duty of one and all, and to be wanting therein is a crime. It necessarily follows that each one has a natural right to procure what is required in order to live, and the poor can procure that in no other way than by what they can earn through their work.

Senate Bill 30 protects the earnings of hardworking Ohioans from a marketplace corrupted by financialization. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer your questions.