



## SHAKER HEIGHTS

March 13, 2015

Tim W. Brown, Chair  
Government Accountability and Oversight Committee  
77 South High Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Brown:

The City of Shaker Heights strongly supports HB 47 - Outdoor Refreshment Areas - open container exemption. It is important to support economic development and tourism efforts by providing for Refreshment Areas to be established by local governments.

Refreshment Areas can support development in many communities, including Shaker Heights. The provision will enhance entertainment options for delegates of the upcoming Republican National Convention in Cleveland. Shaker is connected to downtown Cleveland by the Blue and Green Rapid Transit Lines. Further, the City and RMS developers are about to begin a \$90 million redevelopment of the Van Aken District.

The Van Aken district will be a mixed-use, transit-oriented development: a combination of shops, restaurants, offices and housing, all connected with train service to downtown Cleveland. ODOT has supported this project as a major funder of \$19m in roadwork which is under construction now. The state budget has also supported the project with \$500,000 allocated for the public plaza in the district. The Refreshment Area Bill will support the innovative use of the plaza area.

We support the current bill and urge you to maintain the 25,000 population threshold.

Sincerely,

Earl M. Leiken  
Mayor

c: Representative Janine Boyd  
Ohio House of Representatives, District 9  
77 South High Street, 10th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215