



**Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee
Interested Party Testimony, House Bill 122 (Hambley-Rogers)
Jason E. Warner, Greater Ohio Policy Center
January 10, 2018**

Chairman Coley, Vice Chairman Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni and Members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for providing me this opportunity to offer the position of Greater Ohio on House Bill 122, legislation which, if enacted, would establish the Regional Economic Development Study Committee to investigate the benefits of creating metropolitan economic development alliances.

My name is Jason Warner and I am the Manager of Government Affairs at the Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC). Greater Ohio is a nonprofit nonpartisan organization that is valued for its data-driven research. Our mission is to champion revitalization in Ohio to create economically competitive communities. It is with this mission in mind that Greater Ohio expresses insights on House Bill 122, including recommendations for how the bill can be improved.

Greater Ohio has long supported policies that promote regional sustainable growth. Research by Greater Ohio and others have shown that sprawling land use and development patterns have become economically, environmentally and socially unsustainable for the state and its regions. We see House Bill 122, which creates the Regional Economic Development Alliance Study Committee, as being an important vehicle in fostering thoughtful consideration and review of ways that cities, counties, townships and other public entities can best partner to economically compete from regional areas of strength and effectively address regional needs across Ohio.

To achieve this thorough review, Greater Ohio believes that the committee can be made stronger through the following modifications to the committee membership. These changes would result in the addition of two members beyond what is proposed HB122 in its present form:

- Expand the Ex-Officio Member to include one each of the following
 - A representative of an Ohio-based advocacy group
 - A representative of an Ohio-based foundation
- One member, who is a representative of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The Local Government Innovation Council, created by the legislature in 2011, includes both a representative of an Ohio-based advocacy group and a representative of an Ohio-based foundation. Greater Ohio believes these individuals would provide a unique perspective to the Regional Economic Development Alliance Study Committee.

Greater Ohio further believes that these representatives would provide both a broader pool of potential representatives to service on the committee and a more expansive perspective than

the current proposal for the Chairperson of the Regional Prosperity Initiative. We believe these two representatives should replace the RPI Chair as ex-officio members of the study committee.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are uniquely positioned to help the study committee in its goal of examining ways to address the needs of regions in Ohio, as well as address regional economic development efforts and sharing of services.

Chairman Coley and members of the Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our recommendation as it relates to House Bill 122. I would welcome any questions that the committee may have.