



The City of Grove City, Ohio

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Mayor Richard L. "Ike" Stage
City of Grove City
Amended Senate Bill 310 Written Testimony
Ohio House Finance Committee
June 3, 2020

Chairs Oelslager and Callender,

Thank you for your consideration of SB 310 in the Ohio House Finance Committee. I urge your prompt passage of SB 310 to disburse federal funds to Ohio's local governments through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Ohio's local governments are suffering significant financial hardship due to the effects of the pandemic on our residents and businesses. While businesses have begun to reopen, the effects are still profound, and the duration is yet unknown. Many of our residents and employees have been on the frontlines providing essential services from the beginning, but our ability to provide services continues to be challenged as local revenues have been drastically reduced.

From the earliest COVID-19 days our community proactively implemented multiple plans and services to protect our residents, first responders, businesses, seniors and staff. One of our first community outreach efforts involved establishing – virtually overnight – a Community Help Line manned by City staff 14 hours a day, seven days a week. The Help Line coordinated those in need of food, prescriptions (really anything) with organized churches and volunteers ready to help with any need. When the center was not handling incoming calls they made outbound wellness calls weekly to hundreds of seniors.

Economic Development staff personally called nearly 900 businesses, provided government loan and grant information and answered questions and followed up on specific business needs and requests.

The first two months we operated morning briefings with staff and community organizations, including Village of Urbancrest; Jackson, Pleasant, Prairie and Scioto townships; and the South-Western City School District.

Finally, as an additional expense and not related to COVID-19, we are now bearing the cost of extensive police mutual aid services and staff.

We understand that the legislature is eager to help businesses get back on their feet and resume more normal operations. Grove City is ready, too. Our ability to support the safe reopening and future success of businesses in our community is dependent on the adequacy of the services they need from local government. SB 310 offers us the vital resources we need to support our residents and their businesses during this reopening phase so Grove City can emerge from this crisis as the vibrant, growing and welcoming place our residents have built and should expect in the future.

While we are eager to discuss the distribution and use of the other \$850 million proposed to be held in reserve, it is urgent that you act on the \$350 million designated for local support in SB 310.

We thank you for your hard work during this time of crisis and urge your immediate passage of SB 310.