

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairman Stephens, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee: Thank you for allowing me proponent testimony for SB 311

As we have seen with the current pandemic, there is a grave need for checks and balances. We have the Governor and his unelected officials making mandates without the input of our legislators. The legislators represent the people, and the people's voice has not been heard. S.B 311 would provide those checks and balances by requiring the Ohio Department of Health obtain approval of the general assembly before making health orders. If you do not vote to pass this bill, you are voting to have your power as representative of the people taken away.

My concern about this bill is the authority granted to local health districts to make emergency orders. While this bill prevents abuse of power on the state level, there is still a possibility of it happening on the local level.

Since local health departments get accreditation from the ODH in order to receive funding, I am concerned that the work around this current version will be the Ohio Department of Health strong arming local health districts by refusing funding if they do not adhere to the recommendations put forth by the ODH.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to have my voice heard. I ask that you consider removing the language that grants local health districts sweeping powers to make emergency orders. I urge this committee to please vote yes on SB 311.