



June 9, 2021

To: Chairman Stein, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and Members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee
From: Beth Lear, ABC of Ohio, Vice President of Government Affairs

Re: Opposition to HB 107

Elected officials desire to prevent tragedies. This is completely understandable. Unfortunately, in the attempt to head off all potential disasters, overreach often occurs that does more damage than help.

One such example is the legislative response to the tragic death of 6 year old Jared Bennet of Lebanon who was killed by a falling cafeteria table at his school in 2003. A bill was introduced almost immediately resulting in a new law in 2005 and followed by dozens of onerous regulations.

The law was quietly repealed in 2012 after literally millions of dollars were spent to comply in every one of Ohio's school districts. The schools could simply not afford the cost and compliance was causing more problems than it ever solved.

House Bill 107 is similar in that it purports to solve a problem that is exceedingly rare in Ohio and will result in expensive, job-killing, regulatory overreach. This bill will hurt more people than it helps.

Prior to the pandemic, our national economy was exploding because elected officials championed the elimination of needless, expensive, job killing regulations and excessive licensure programs that limit worker opportunities. Now is certainly not the time to lose more ground by passing an unwarranted licensure bill that cannot demonstrate a public safety need. Data actually reveals many more deaths from people taking stairs than elevators – should we increase the regulations overseeing those?

Ohio has sufficient safeguards in place. We operate under the National Safety Standards for Elevators and Escalators, ASME A17.1 and the National Safety Standard for Vertical Platform Lifts, Stairlifts and Incline Platform Lifts, ASME A18.1. Elevators are also required by law to be inspected twice a year with a few exceptions allowing for annual inspections instead.

The Center for Construction Research and Training, an organization that performs research for the AFL-CIO and other labor unions, found elevators nationwide are responsible for an estimated 27 deaths per year, most resulting from falls. As I just mentioned, stairs are more dangerous. Reuters reported more than 1 million Americans are injured annually from taking the stairs and more than 1,000 of those die. Elevators are overwhelmingly safe and elevator mechanics are well trained in ABC's merit-shop programs and union classes.



Ohio Republicans have seen the necessity of lessening regulations to promote business in a state where people are leaving in droves. HB 107 is viewed by your own “Occupational Regulation Report” as the most restrictive option of our regulatory policy options. The report also notes the bill adds to an already “substantial regulatory framework that currently applies to the installation and repair of conveyance systems.”

Government intervention can never eliminate all risk or tragedy. It’s impossible. And this government intervention has not been proven to be necessary. Notably no elevator deaths have been recorded here since this legislation was first introduced years ago. Ohio *does not need* this legislation.

While government intervention does not eliminate tragedy, it **does** result in protectionism, and licensure limits access to living wage jobs. HB 107 will do more harm than good. It will remove opportunities for men and women trying to access good paying jobs at a time when the economy is struggling and inflation is rising.

For these reasons, ABC of Ohio asks you to oppose HB 107 which adds an expensive and burdensome licensure process to an industry that is already substantially and successfully regulated.