



March 10, 2021

The Honorable Jay Edwards
Chairman, Ohio House Economic and Workforce Development Committee

RE: House Bill 168 Letter of Support

Dear Chairman Edwards:

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and our 8,000 members, I write to you in support of House Bill 168; legislation that provides emergency grant funding for local fairs, indoor entertainment venues, new businesses, and small businesses.

All the groups above have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and this bill brings targeted assistance to help them through these difficult, unprecedented times. HB 168 provides much-needed grants to help try to alleviate some of the loss that these industries have experienced over the course of the last year.

Small businesses, in particular, have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Small Business Relief Grant Program was created late last year and was designed to provide necessary relief to Ohio businesses that have been negatively impacted by the effects of COVID-19.

The continuation of this program through the funding included in HB 168 will continue to provide a lifeline to small businesses. Businesses would be eligible to apply for grants of \$10,000. These funds can be used for any of the following:

- Personal protective equipment to protect employees, customers, or clients from COVID-19.
- Measures taken to protect employees, customers, or clients from COVID-19.
- Mortgage or rent payments for business premises (personal residences explicitly excluded).
- Utility payments (excludes utilities for personal residences and cellular phones not used primarily for business purposes).

- Salaries, wages, or compensation paid to contractors or employees, including an employer's share of health insurance costs.
- Business supplies or equipment.

We want to thank Representatives Fraizer and Loychik for bringing this important legislation forward and we want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing HB 168 up for a hearing today.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding our support of HB 168 at kboehner@ohiochamber.com or 614-228-4201.

Respectfully,



Kevin Boehner

Director, Small Business and Workforce Policy