



**Senator George Lang**  
4<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Sponsor Testimony for Am. Sub. Senate Bill 134  
House Economic and Workforce Development Committee  
June 9, 2021

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on Amended Substitute Senate Bill 134 – the “Business Fairness Act”.

This legislation is nearly identical to House Bill 215, which is being sponsored by Representatives Cross and Wilkin, and recently passed the House by a vote of 77-17. In fact, the only difference between Senate Bill 134 and the House-passed version of House Bill 215 is that my bill contains an emergency clause.

Fundamentally, the Business Fairness Act seeks ensure that all businesses, both small and large alike, have the ability to operate on a level playing field during a state of emergency. The bill states that if an order or rule issued by the Health Director or the Department of Health forces a business to close or limit operations, then that business may reopen or remain open if it complies with all safety precautions put in place for businesses that were allowed to continue operations.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and are vital to each of our local communities, but many were forced to close their doors, while their large retail competitors were permitted to remain open. This legislation will allow these businesses to stay open, provided they meet the proper guidelines and safety standards.

During the past year, Ohio’s small businesses proved that they are willing to go above and beyond to protect the health and safety of their customers and employees. All they ask is to be held to the same standard as their competitors.

I should note that this legislation was passed unanimously by the Senate, and I would urge your favorable consideration.

Chairman Edwards, thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I would be happy to answer any questions members of the committee may have.