

Chairman Edwards, Vice-Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 105.

The journey I've had as a black, female, service-disabled veteran has been humbling to say the least. Although I was born in the hills of Tennessee, Ohio is where I call my home now. While I was serving on active duty, as a fourth generation veteran and first officer in my family, I learned I had inherited a recipe for a sauce made by my grandfather in 1956. My late grandfather's military call sign when he served in Korea/Vietnam was Mutt, for his adaptive persona. When I started the company Mutt's Sauce in 2013, I had a lot of heart, but no relative business experience. It was an organization in Dayton, SCORE that provided the mentorship that helped me start the company. On my checklist was to attain my certifications. As you can see, I fit all of the categories in Senate Bill 105. The process of certification was tedious and involved a lot of paperwork. With my military background in acquisitions and process improvement, you can probably understand my level of frustration with all the applications. But since being certified, it did open many doors for me as a business owner and as a company.

Small business drives the local economy. I've been in awe of the positive impact Mutt's Sauce has been able to make in Ohio and around the world. We've sent care packages to deployed troops. We've raised money for countless charities, and, in the wake of the pandemic and all of the socio-economic and cultural challenges this country has faced- it's empowered Americans like me to be a voice for the voiceless and be a messenger for positive change.

Senate Bill 105 will directly affect my ability to continue making an impact. The pandemic devastated the food and beverage community, specifically in the Dayton area. It's considered a food desert. In a town that is rich with aerospace and military history, more investment needs to be made in an industry that affects our everyday life—food. For the past two years, I've been lobbying for the construction of a shared use commercial kitchen in the historic Dayton Arcade. I had to start another company for the purposes of this project, OH Taste. It will be called 6888 Kitchen. That name should sound familiar. I named it after the 6888 Postal Battalion, the historic group of over 800 black female soldiers sent to fix the backlog of mail in World War II. Their commander, Maj Charity Adams, resided in Dayton, OH. They took on an impossible task, and did it with grace and dignity. I don't need this kitchen, personally. But my peers do. And the city needs it. It will provide hope, jobs, and really good food. And my company will need all of the necessary certifications, because it will be minority, woman, service-disabled owned. I want to thank Sen Sherrod Brown and Congressman Mike Turner, both who have Congressional earmarks in the process of review, with FY22 funding identified for the 6888 Kitchen. One team, One fight. It is an honor to continue to serve in the greatest country on Earth.

Again, thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on SB 105.

*Charlynda Scales*

*Founder, Mutt's Sauce LLC*