



OHIO CHAMBER *of* COMMERCE

October 26, 2021

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

RE: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 105

Dear Chairman Edwards:

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and our thousands of members, I am writing you to lend our support for Senate Bill 105; legislation that would require political subdivisions to recognize state certifications of minority business enterprises (MBEs), women business enterprises (WBEs), and veteran business enterprises (VBEs).

The Ohio Chamber regularly tackles issues that put forth unfair or uneven restrictions or regulations on businesses in our state. We believe strongly that a business owner that has been certified at the state level as an MBE, WBE, or VBE must be recognized by local political subdivisions as a certified MBE, WBE, or VBE. This serves as a removal of an unnecessary hurdle or burden faced by business owners attempting to operate as an MBE, WBE, or VBE at local levels in Ohio.

We have heard from many business owners throughout the state that they are not certified as MBEs because the process is too cumbersome and takes too much time away from running their business. According to the US Small Business Administration, Ohio has 122,602 MBEs. But, the Ohio Department of Development reports that there are only 1,145 MBEs certified by the state. This means that less than 1% of Ohio MBEs are registered. With that said, we view the MBE certification as a prime opportunity to encourage and promote increased business opportunities for minority entrepreneurs. If we can improve the application process and get more MBEs certified, we can broaden the ability of MBEs to seek out business opportunities and realize the benefits of being certified.

As such, we want to offer our support towards streamlining and making the application process easier for business owners to be certified as minority business enterprises. This includes ensuring that the application is only asking for information to identify and verify that the business owner is operating as a minority business enterprise.

We want to thank Senators Vernon Sykes and Kirk Schuring for bringing this important legislation forward. Also, we would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for bringing SB 105 up for a hearing today.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding our support of SB 105 at kboehner@ohiochamber.com or 614-228-4201.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin Boehner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "B".

Kevin Boehner
Director, Small Business and Workforce Policy