



**House Economic and Workforce Development Committee**  
**Chairman Jay Edwards**  
**Proponent Testimony on Substitute SB 105**

**Ohio Women's Coalition**  
**Rachel Winder, Executive Director**  
**October 20, 2021**

Chairman Edwards, Vice-Chair Powell, Ranking Member Upchurch and members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee,

My name is Rachel Winder and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Women's Coalition (OWC) which is a new, statewide organization of women business owners advocating for women's economic growth in the state.

I am providing testimony today on behalf of the OWC in support of Substitute SB 105, sponsored by Senator Sykes and Senator Schuring, which would simplify the certification process for Minority, Women-Owned and Veteran-Friendly Business Enterprises across Ohio.

The bill which was amended in the Senate to include Women-Owned Businesses would allow certification that is obtained from the state to be recognized by local governments across Ohio to eliminate or reduce the need to prove you are a women-owned business multiple times to be able to compete for government contracts across the state.

Unfortunately, the process for certification is burdensome and time-consuming. Although we recognize and appreciate the need to be thorough to prevent fraud within these programs, our members have had to go through the certification process in multiple venues to prove that they are women-owned repeatedly.

Women receive just a fraction of government contracts. The WBE program was created a few years ago to solve a specific problem in other states that require certification in Ohio, but the Ohio program does not come with goals or set-asides for agencies to increase contracting opportunities for women-owned businesses. There is no incentive to contract with WBE's in Ohio, and the numbers show that it simply isn't happening. We are in conversations with the administration to consider investing in a disparity study for the state of Ohio to determine how the state is currently providing government contracting opportunities to Ohioans, but also to protect the state from any challenges to these important statutory preference programs.

We appreciate Senator Sykes and Senator Schuring introducing this important legislation that is truly a good government program to help mostly small businesses reduce unnecessary administrative work and cost.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. We respectfully urge a favorable vote on Substitute SB 105.