



**House Energy & Natural Resources Committee  
April 21, 2021  
Opponent Testimony – HB 201  
Ilene Shapiro, Summit County Executive**

Chair Stephens, Vice Chair Stewart, Ranking Member Weinstein and members of the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 201.

As an elected county official, it is my duty to advocate for the principle of Home Rule and the right to local self-government. I believe House Bill 201 infringes on Ohio's constitutionally protected Home Rule Authority by enacting prohibitions on local governments related to the use of natural gas in their communities.

Ohio's Constitution explicitly grants municipalities the right to exercise all powers of local self-government as long as they are not in conflict with state laws. This right to home rule allows local government to act in the best interest of their communities. Ohio is a large, diverse state. Its citizens elect representatives at the local level to enact laws, rules and regulations that best fit the needs of their community. Prescribing restrictions on local government's ability to govern in their own self-interest erodes this relationship between citizens and local government.

The use of natural gas across Ohio's 88 counties and many more municipalities varies greatly, and its use will likely change as our nation further embraces various energy generation options. Home rule authority allows each of these communities to determine which energy sources are most beneficial to its residents and businesses.

In recent years, we have seen similar legislation enacted at the expense of Home Rule authority. I am disheartened to see this trend continuing in the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Summit County is committed to working with its partners in the state legislature to solve problems. House Bill 201 and other bills encroaching on Home Rule are not the solutions we should seek.

I believe House Bill 201 violates the Home Rule provisions of the Ohio Constitution and should not be adopted. Thank you, again, for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ilene Shapiro".

Ilene Shapiro, Executive  
County of Summit