



**Senator Sandra Williams  
21<sup>st</sup> Ohio Senate District**

**Senate Bill 244 Sponsor Testimony  
General Government Budget Committee  
October 19, 2021**

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Wilson, and members of the General Government Budget Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 244 (SB 244).

The purpose of SB 244 is to simply strengthen elevator laws in Ohio to protect our vulnerable citizens from undue burdens and extreme living conditions. This legislation was developed in response to concerns from constituents who have experienced unreasonable and undue hardships due to prolonged elevator outages where they live and work. Specifically, constituents have contacted my office with reports of extended elevator outages in senior buildings where they are unable to climb stairs, yet live on upper level floors. This often displaces them or, even worse, requires them to sleep in their cars or in the lobbies of the building because they have no way of getting to their unit.

Currently, The Ohio Department of Commerce is responsible for inspecting elevators twice a year; however, there is no current requirement for property owners to report each time their elevators break down. If enacted SB 244 would do the following: (1) require the Department of Commerce to have a database of elevators that are not working in buildings that are required by the ADA to have elevators; (2) respond to outages within 72 hours of the entry for an update on the progress for repair; (3) require signage to be posted when elevators are not working in buildings; and (4) require a time frame of the expected timeframe the elevator will be repaired to be posted. SB 244 also requires that if an elevator is out for more than four days, reasonable accommodations have to be made to residents who rely on the elevator.

At the permission of the Chair, I would like to show the committee a news clip that was reported by Cleveland News 5 investigative reporter, Jonathan Walsh, who has been reporting on hardships citizens face when elevators are down.

As you will see, SB 244 is about making sure people are living a humane life and have the basics that they need to do so. This legislation ensures that building owners

and landlords are doing their due diligence to make sure repairs are being made promptly and that the state is holding them accountable.

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Wilson, and members of the committee, this concludes my testimony and I will be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.