

Testimony submitted to the
Senate Health Committee
House Bill 110
Gina Trebilcock, The Cleveland Foundry

Chair Huffman, Vice-Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and Members of the Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 110. I am Gina Trebilcock. My husband, Mike, and I founded The Foundry Community Rowing and Sailing Center in Cleveland.

The Foundry is a 501(c)3 organization that was established in 2015 with the mission to provide youth of all backgrounds, abilities and experience the opportunity to develop and grow through the sports of rowing and sailing. We utilize these sports to leverage social-emotional learning experiences every child needs to develop into healthy, confident, productive young adults. We currently accomplish this mission through outreach programs and year-round water-based programs that serve over 5,000 Cleveland area youth each year.

Rowing and sailing are incredible platforms for positive youth development and teach life skills including teamwork, trust, tenacity, and personal accountability. Unfortunately, economic barriers exist for too many youths in our community, who could truly benefit from the experiences that water-based sports can provide.

When we established The Foundry, I was shocked at the number of youths in Cleveland who have never been exposed to our Great Lake or our namesake river. We are changing that narrative. Our focus is to give children an ability to experience these tremendous natural resources, regardless of their economic hardships.

At The Foundry, we aim to introduce physical health and fitness during the critical middle school years when participation in physical activity drops. According to the CDC, few children in the United States meet the currently recommended standard of at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily. In addition to the physical benefits of exercise, research has shown that participation in outdoor recreation has profound positive effects on mental health and wellbeing.

The Foundry aims to change the stigma that water sports are exclusive by providing inclusive programs to all youth, especially those whose options may otherwise be limited. Building on the existing relationship that The Foundry has with the Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD) and the City of Cleveland's Recreation Department, we plan to significantly expand the reach of the unique experience we provide to the youth in our community.

Sometimes it's best to hear from the students themselves. Allow me to read a few of their direct quotes:

"If I can be a leader in the boat, I can be a leader in life" – High School Rower

"Overcoming outside obstacles...creates perseverance, motivation, hard work. It's out of your comfort zone...it expands what you see...If you change up your scenery you change up your mindset..." – High School Rower

"Because of the Foundry, sailing is my motivation for everything" – High School Sailor

"Being at the Foundry gave me a sense of belonging, and new opportunities- I loved it!" (MB)

Requested State Support: We ask for your support to dedicate \$700,000 each year through the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program to fund the Foundry's Row Cleveland, Sail Cleveland initiative. This initiative will allow the Foundry to double our capacity and provide rowing and sailing opportunities for over 10,000 Cleveland youth.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.