



Terri Argent, Health Commissioner

**Interested Party Testimony  
Massillon City Health Department  
House Bill 110**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Minority Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee.

My name is Terri Argent, Health Commissioner with the Massillon City Health Department. The Massillon City Health Department has served the health needs of all of the residents of Massillon for over a century. We have done this by providing excellent, cost-effective services to the people and businesses in our community. That long tradition of excellence is now in jeopardy. I would like to draw your attention to the second omnibus amendment to HB110 requiring cities with a population of less than 50,000 to complete a study evaluating the feasibility of merging with a general Health District.

The Massillon City Health Department, over the past century, has proven its value and is now nearing the completion of the Ohio Revised Code requirements to achieve National Accreditation. Over the past two years, we have produced over 300 documents and spent over \$25,000 to achieve this accreditation. These are national standards, meaning that further study of feasibility would be redundant, unnecessary, and a waste of taxpayer dollars.

For our part, the citizens of Massillon and Massillon City Council have provided evidence of their support to maintain a local Health Department through a City Council resolution that I will include with this testimony.

As we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, smaller local health departments are at the front lines improving access to health care for our underserved communities. We are carrying out work to improve the health of our citizens by preventing disease, promoting healthy living and protecting against public health threats. Now is the time to strengthen our public health system with the tools and resources it needs. I ask the legislature to work with local health departments and the communities they serve to fund public health and advance public policy that will help us meet that mission.

In conclusion, one size does not fit all. The City of Massillon is better able to determine the needs of our citizens than someone in Columbus that does not know our Hispanic/Latino population, our homeless needs, or our underserved African/American and elderly community. Let us continue to do what we do best, serve the health needs of the residents of Massillon.

Thank you for your consideration.