

Senate Judiciary Committee
Proponent Testimony
Senate Bill 182
Written Testimony Only

Robbie McLaren Seaton-Todd

June 5, 2021

Dear Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Cecil Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Robbie Seaton-Todd and I am a resident of Lake County. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Ohio Senate Bill 182.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Robbie Seaton-Todd. I have spent years as a government contractor conducting nuclear physics experiments for the National Science Foundation and, most recently, I direct a nonprofit that aims to end the use of disposable plastics in the restaurant industry here in northeast Ohio. I strongly support Senate Bill 182.

My professional experiences have shown me that efficient and reasonable budgeting, as well as intentional reflection and transparency, must be used to achieve the best results. It would have been impossible for my physics collaboration to create and publish work on never-before-seen chemical isotopes had we not pinned down a **precise, justifiable** budget for the operation of publicly-funded particle accelerators. Additionally, the nonprofit organization would never be able to convince restaurants to invest in reusable cutlery or returnable takeout packaging if we don't show them how the switch saves money within three years. The ability to present a budget whose structure is justified, through necessity and reason, is crucial in all successful endeavors.

These experiences are part of what makes me deeply object to Ohio continuing a wealth-based process of pretrial detention (~63% of our neighbors who are being kept in jail are there **pretrial**, before any verdict of guilt has been decided). An ACLU of Ohio report found that bail reform would save \$199-264 million every year! It costs the state so much money to detain citizens who are legally innocent. In any other societal system, from science to food to supply chains, this degree of waste and misuse would not be tolerated. It's time to value taxpayers' money and reform Ohio's bail policy.

Finally, my personal experience with family and friends who have been kept in jail pretrial simply because they could not pay for their release—and therefore were more likely to be convicted—is what shows beyond a doubt that this system needs fixing.

A justice system that not only wastes money which could easily be saved but that also makes decisions based on resources rather than culpability is not justice. I'm grateful to see a bill that has the potential to fix these problems, and I hope its integrity is preserved all the way through into a full law.

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote yes on this critically important bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.