

George Lang
State Senator
4th Senate District



Rob McColley
State Senator
1st Senate District

Sponsor Testimony
Senate Bill 189
Senate Judiciary Committee
June 16, 2021

Senator Lang:

Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee: thank you the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 189. The goal of this legislation is to save Ohioans' time and money by allowing them to contest state agency orders in their county of residence, rather than in Franklin County.

I will acknowledge that the current law is a certainly a convenience to state agencies, but it is a significant inconvenience to our state's citizens and businesses. Consider a small business owner from my district in southwestern Ohio, or from Senator McColley's district in the northwestern part of the state. The time and expense required for that individual and/or their legal counsel to travel to and from Franklin County is substantial. We also shouldn't discount the lost productivity caused by pulling someone away from their place of business for a prolonged period of time.

When a business is weighing whether to continue or establish operations here in Ohio versus another state, one of the key things that business will consider is the relative cost and complexity of doing business in Ohio versus elsewhere. By reducing that cost and complexity, this bill will make it easier for existing Ohio businesses to remain here and thrive, and will enhance our ability to attract new businesses and jobs.

My joint sponsor, Senator McColley, will provide some additional details about the mechanics of the bill.

Senator McColley:

Thank you, Senator Lang. In addition to inconveniencing Ohio's citizens and businesses, current law also gives outsized authority to the courts in one county at the expense of those in the remaining 87.

There are several important notes to make about the provisions of this bill:

- It will not affect the jurisdiction of the Court of Claims to hear suits for damages against the State or its agencies.
- It will not impact the provisions of Senate Bill 22 that allow citizens to sue the state or its agencies in their home county.

- Jurisdiction will remain in Franklin County for cases involving non-Ohio residents or businesses with no Ohio place of business.

To reiterate, the focus of Senate Bill 189 is solely on instances where an Ohio citizen or business is appealing an adverse action of state agencies.

Lastly, I should also note this is not a new concept. Senate Bill 189 will simply revert Ohio Law to what it was prior to several amendments between 1959 and 2015.

Chairman Manning, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Senator Lang and I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.