



**Senator George Lang**  
4<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Sponsor Testimony for Senate Bill 134  
Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee  
March 24, 2021

Chairman Rulli, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 134 – the “Business Fairness Act”.

The purpose of this legislation is straightforward: to ensure that all businesses, both small and large alike, have the ability to operate on a level playing field during a state of emergency. The bill states that if a business that has been required to close or limit operations can meet the same safety standards put in place for businesses deemed essential by the Health Director or the board of health of a city or general health district, that business may reopen or continue operating.

Here is a simple example:

A big box store is deemed essential and allowed to remain open during a state of emergency. Consumers may shop for jewelry at that big box store, with its hundreds, if not thousands, of shoppers per day. They cannot, however, visit their locally-owned jewelry store which serves a fraction of the number of customers on a daily basis. The impact of this disparity can be devastating for these small businesses, which are often “mom-and-pop” establishments. This legislation will allow these businesses to stay open, provided they meet the proper guidelines and safety standards.

SB 134 is similar to HB 621 from the 133rd General Assembly, which passed by a vote of 77-10 in the House. The Business Fairness Act is an important and necessary step to ensure that businesses of every size can continue to operate and thrive in Ohio.

Chairman Rulli, thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I would be happy to answer any questions members of the committee may have.