

Affiliated Construction Trades Ohio Foundation

Matthew Szollosi, Executive Director
mszollosi@actohio.org | (614) 795-3164



April 6, 2022

Senator Michael Rulli, Chairman
Ohio Senate Small Business & Economic Opportunity Committee
Ohio Statehouse
Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Rulli, Vice-Chair Lang & Ranking Member Sykes:

Please be advised that the Affiliated Construction Trades Ohio Foundation (“ACT Ohio”) is a 501(c)(5) organization created to facilitate economic and industrial development opportunities, and to promote industry-best practices for Ohio’s public and private construction.

ACT Ohio currently has 137 local affiliates across the state, who in the aggregate represent more than 95,000 building trades members. ACT Ohio has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to promote careers in construction to Ohioans of all ethnic and socio-economic circumstances. We are aggressively recruiting the best and the brightest to seek an apprenticeship and develop skills that can sustain a family. We strongly support the concept of getting young people, minorities, females and veterans involved and interested in Ohio’s construction industry.

Please be advised that ACT Ohio supports many of the concepts set forth in SB 196. I have had several productive conversations with Sen. Roegner regarding the intent of the legislation.

Building standards and adherence to building codes are an essential part of our every-day business. Inevitably, conflicts in interpretation arise and the majority of these conflicts are worked out short of the formal appeal process set out in law. However, there are occasions in the construction industry whereby these issues cannot be privately resolved. These matters are addressed through appeals to entities known as Boards of Building Appeals. These BBAs exist at the municipal, county and state levels.

Initially, our industry partners had concerns regarding the impact of the 24 hour commencement and 72 hour hearing timelines. I have since received clarification on the commencement process and the move to 5 days was beneficial.

Additionally, it is my understanding that the bill has no impact whatsoever on enforcement procedures including a building department’s authority to issue stop work orders regarding illegal or un-approved work.

Finally, we have better understanding of the anticipated volume increase of appeals at each of these levels if the expedited processes set forth in the bill are put in place. Inclusion in the bill language that requires the Chief Building Official to sign an order authorizing an expedited appeal helps reassure us that the local procedures are not going to be bypassed or compromised.

While I remain sensitive to the largely unknown potential volume of increase of appeals at each of these levels, I believe any significant increases can be addressed once we know more. As I have stressed in my conversations, the members of these BBAs are part-time, dedicated individuals that have separate full-time careers, and families. It is highly beneficial to the construction industry to have knowledgeable, experienced individuals making these determinations, and given their full schedules their time is valuable. We appreciate the work that they do.

However, I do believe the expedited appeal process set forth in SB 196 could have the desired effect of helping both sides to potential disputes find common ground and troubleshoot these differences quickly.

Thank you for your time and I appreciate the consideration that has been given to address many of our initial concerns.