



SMALL BUSINESS AND
ECONOMIC OPPURTUNITY
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Name:

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Today's Date

5 April 2022

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Organization Representing:

VFW Ohio Cheairties

Testifying on Bill Number:

SB 291

Testimony:

Verbal

Written

Both

Testifying As:

Proponent

Opponent

Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist?

Yes

No

Special Requests:

None

Chairman Rull, Vice Chairman Lang, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Economic Opportunity Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 291.

I would first like to introduce myself. I am Iris Foster-DelNieuwe a Veteran of Desert Storm and a Life Member of the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars). I am a member of VFW Post 3764 located here in Columbus where I serve as the Post Quarter Master. I also serve as the Senior Vice Commander for the VFW's Department of Ohio District 11. Additionally, I am the Executive Director of the VFW's Ohio Charities.

Senate Bill 291 if enacted will provide much needed assistance to Veterans that own and operate small businesses. Currently throughout the great state of Ohio approximately 92,000 businesses are owned and operated by Veterans. These Veterans have demonstrated an unparalleled success rate. Much of this is due to skills learned in the military and carried over to their civilian enterprises.

Studies have shown that:

1. Veteran owned business owners are extremely motivated – they are 45% more likely to operate a successful business.
2. Veteran business owners are highly skilled – many like myself have served 20 or more years in the military bringing with them to the civilian sector the necessary skills to successfully operate a business. It is a known fact that 78% of Veteran business owners have served in the military for 20 years or more.
3. Veterans are excellent at long term planning – a skill that is required, impactful, necessary and definitely required in order to operate a successful a business.
4. Veterans know how to preserve.
5. Veteran businesses create jobs – small Veteran business owners generated \$120 billion in payrolls last year. A definite impact and boost for the economy.

Senate Bill 291 will provide Ohio Veterans and the disadvantaged the tools and opportunity to excel. The Ohio Veteran community applauds and welcome the enactment of Senate Bill 291 to include:

1. The 15% set aside provisions included in the proposed bill that allows disadvantaged and Veterans to compete for agency contracts.
2. The special notifications regarding bids for Ohio's agencies.
3. The in-site inspection process to validate the qualifications of Veteran owned businesses.
4. Procedures for a Veteran owned business to obtain certification, and the very important provision that would disqualify a business that does not meet the specified criteria for qualifications.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony for Senate Bill 291.