

April 11, 2018

Dear Chairman Eklund, Vice Chair Terhar, Senators Williams, Beagle, Hackett, Jordan, Lehner, Peterson, Schiavoni, Thomas and Wilson:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony to the Senate Ways and Means Committee. I write today asking that you support the passage of House Bill 133 because it will go a long way toward helping disaster relief victims here in Ohio in their time of greatest need.

My name is Jeff McElroy, and for eight years I served as the Regional Disaster Direct Service Support Manager at the Red Cross of Central Ohio. In that capacity I was responsible for the management of disaster resources for sixty-seven Ohio counties. Before that, I served as a police officer with the City of Columbus Division of Police for nine years. In these roles, I assisted in my share of recovery efforts in the wake of natural disasters, so I know firsthand the toll that experience can take on a community.

After treating the wounded and providing shelter, working to restore vital services like water and electricity is of the utmost importance in any recovery effort. And if there are steps we can take to reduce the amount of time these critical services are down for those reeling from disaster, I believe we have a moral obligation to act.

HB 133 is that action. Removing barriers—like local tax and licensing compliance—to the quick and efficient deployment of out-of-state relief workers, will undoubtedly decrease response times from utility companies working to restore service to customers in affected areas. Every hour counts in a declared state of emergency.

With natural disasters, it's never a question of 'if' but 'when.' I ask that you please think of the victims of Ohio's next emergency as you consider this legislation, and I hope you will act in their best interest.

Please support the passage of HB 133.

Thank you.

Jeff McElroy
337 Naiche Ct.
Columbus, Ohio 43213