

Senate Bill 309
Testimony - November 14, 2018
Senate Ways and Means Committee
Columbus 2020
Kenny McDonald



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Chairman Eklund, Vice-Chairman Terhar, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, thank you for permitting me to testify as a proponent on behalf of Senate Bill 309. My name is Kenny McDonald, and I am the President and Chief Economic Officer of Columbus 2020.

Columbus 2020 serves as the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region, working in partnership with state and local partners to generate opportunity and build capacity for economic growth.

As you know, economic development is very competitive. Ohio and its communities are competing with those around the United States to retain our existing employers and to secure new investment from around the world. Now more than ever, our state is part of the conversation for significant projects and some of the world's largest investments.

Nearly a year ago our team started reaching out to my economic development colleagues and respected location advisors around the country. We wanted to know what was setting apart our region and state from the others and what were the key difference makers that separated first place from second on these high impact projects. We studied our project pipeline over the past several years and we spoke directly to clients about their biggest opportunities. We wanted to better to understand how to proactively enhance our state's competitive position in advance of expected future opportunities.

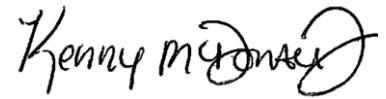
Many of the things that are allowing other states to have an advantage can be found right here in this legislation. There is and will continue to be several high-impact capital investment projects being considered in the United States as companies seek scale and efficiency to their operations. We have a small number of large sites in Ohio that have the general characteristics to compete but we have to be prepared to be highly responsive to business seeking an Ohio location for unique and large scale opportunities. I believe that Senate Bill 309 will send a signal that Ohio wants to be strongly considered for significant, market-changing projects.

We are continuing discussions with some of the most notable site selection firms in the world and they believe Ohio would be well served to have legislation in place that shows we are prepared to partner with companies that want to make high-impact, long-term investments. With Senate Bill 309, we are showing that we are taking a thoughtful, performance-based and future oriented view toward business and innovation.

We are grateful for Senator Peterson and his team for their diligent work in understanding the importance of laying the groundwork to succeed in the future. I look forward to working with you all to continue to create a dynamic and growing economy here in Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 309 and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

KENNY McDONALD, CECD President and Chief Economic Officer

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenny McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K" and "M".