

THE OHIO COUNCIL OF

Retail Merchants
The voice of retail since 1922

January 26, 2022

The Honorable Dick Stein
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High St.
12th Floor
Columbus OH, 43215

Dear Chairman Stein:

On behalf of the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants and our over 7,000 members, we write in opposition to House Bill 235.

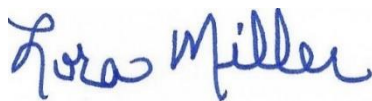
The legislation would impose anti-free market requirements on private entities, namely Ohio's four oil refineries, while inserting the heavy hand of government into the employee-employer relationship under the guise of workplace safety. As currently written, HB 235 would require the operators of these facilities to contract solely with contractors and/or subcontractors who utilize laborers from certain apprenticeship programs. If passed, the anti-competitive nature of this legislation would likely limit the availability of eligible workers during a time that all employers are already struggling to meet their workforce needs. In addition, the bill would likely raise labor costs for businesses and as a result, increase costs throughout segments of the industry.

The safety of workers is paramount for the employer community. The bill purports to address workplace safety concerns, yet little evidence has been presented that current industry practices jeopardize the safety of workers. It presents as a solution in search of a problem.

Lastly, the bill creates a worrisome precedent of further imposing bureaucracy and government mandates on private employers at a time when they can ill-afford the accompanying compliance costs.

We greatly appreciate the committee's consideration of our concerns and the opportunity to provide comments. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Lora Miller
Director of Governmental Affairs
and Public Relations



Alex T. Boehnke
Manager of Public Affairs

CC: Members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee