



**HOUSE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE
INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY ON H.B. 372**

**Provided on March 29, 2022 by
Andrea Ashley, Vice President of Government Relations
Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Ohio**

Chair Stein, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and Representatives on the House Commerce and Labor Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.B. 372, legislation that would create an expedited building appeals process.

AGC of Ohio is a construction association that represents large and small, union and open shop (non-union), commercial building and industrial contractors from across the state. Our members work in both the public and private arena; they construct hospitals, offices, schools, wastewater treatment plants, warehouses and manufacturing facilities, mixed-use developments, and a host of other vertical structures. They can work with building departments from the very start of the project during the plan approval process; throughout the building inspection process; and until the final occupancy permits are received by the owner.

AGC appreciates Representative Roemer and Ray's efforts to help the building industry with this legislation, and thanks Representative Roemer for reaching out to us. We support the concept of the bill and agree there is a need for a more efficient appeals process.

Under current law, a typical building appeal can last 30-60 days. The lengthy timeframe negatively impacts a project. Oftentimes a portion of work needs to be put on hold, and that delay hurts the entire project timeline, the construction team (contractors, subcontractors, tradespeople), as well as the project's owner who usually wants to occupy the building as soon as possible to perform the organization's business. Delays are very burdensome and expensive for everyone involved.



While considering the needs of those involved in the project, we must also consider the bill's impact on the local and state building appeals boards and their ability to do their job and provide an appropriate level of customer service to the industry. To provide some background... appeals boards hear more than just building appeals; they likely also hear appeals related to local housing, property maintenance, fire, etc. Additionally, they do not operate full-time, and board members often have other positions and job responsibilities.

With that in mind, our members have expressed their support for a quicker appeals process, but do have concerns about unintended consequences. Specifically, potential abuse of the expedited process, overwhelming appeals boards, and the impact on other appeals ("jumping in line").

We hope to work with Representatives Roemer and Ray to address those issues and ensure the bill streamlines the building appeals process for contractors without adversely impacting the boards of building appeals services to the industry.