WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 05/09/2022

Name: Mark Shaffer

Are you representing: Yourself ☐ Organization ☑

Organization (If Applicable): Stark County Township Association

Position/Title: President

Address: 2600 Easton Street NW

City: Canton State: Ohio Zip: 44721

Best Contact Telephone: 330-309-6151 Email: m.shaffer@cantontwp-oh.gov

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes ☑ No ☐

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): H.B. 463 / S.B. 324

Specific Issue: Transfer of District Advisory Council to County Comm.

Are you testifying as a: Proponent ☐ Opponent ☑ Interested Party ☐

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes ☑ No ☐

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? Provided in Written Form Only

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Please see attached.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

The Stark County Township Association, with 100% elected officials membership including every (17 total) township within the County of Stark, Ohio, finds itself unable to support H.B. 463 / S.B. 324 of the 134th General Assembly. Of particular interest, it should be dually noted ***opposition to this bill arrives from the group of elected officials who DIRECTLY represent the majority of the population of Stark County*** - when all political subdivisions are factored.

The elimination of the make-up of an Advisory Council, which here in Stark County, has proven to serve well by providing a forum for proper feedback, representation, and guidance to all things Health District/Board of Health can and should be viewed as an attempt to stifle the constructive and productive collaboration that has manifested itself over the years in this county and has placed our efforts on a positive trajectory. This attempt should also be viewed as yet another opportunity to eliminate the voice of the people from Health Department matters and further isolate those who perform the work of the health district from the need for transparency and eliminates additional opportunities where matters of question could be called out by Advisory Council members, which all share an equal voice, contrary to the concept of this proposed legislation.

Fact is, the Stark County Health Department works to serve all constituents and to that end makes extra effort to be responsive to and in service of each subdivision who participates on the Advisory Council. This bill, in present form, again will serve to eliminate the voice of those who represent the majority of the population in Stark County further restricting oversight. Consolidating oversight in the manner as put forth in this bill is no answer to the problem as apparently posed. Instead, the Advisory Council format should be used as an example of fair representation across all subdivisions supporting a Health District across the state. Furthermore, the Health District funding is, in part, provided by the townships (and other participating subdivisions) and the Advisory Council serves as a primary means by which every contributing party may work to hold the Board of Health responsible for the proper and reasonable execution in spending those funds.

Finally, while the townships across Stark County have great respect for the role and functions of our County Board of Commissioners, the primary duties called out in this bill, as proposed, which will resort in the County Board of Commissioners having extended duties and unilateral power, as derived from the Advisory Council of today – is also an item of opposition. A more robust and complete Advisory Council approach simply does a better job in each of the 7 categories called out in the bill, exclusively. There are inherent concerns associated with a Board of Commissioners being the centralized voice in any of these categories. Above all, there is no recourse apparent when concerns or issues come to light that may affect a change that is as efficient or transparent as the Advisory Council effort.