



Public Health
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Ashtabula City Health Department

**Proponent Written Testimony
Ashtabula City Health Department
Terri Collett, REHS
Senate Bill 338**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chairman Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today on my support for Senate Bill 338.

My name is Terri Collett, I am the Environmental Health Director for the Ashtabula City Health Department. I have served in this capacity for 15 years and accumulated a total of 20 years' experience in the field of Food Safety. As the sole Registered Environmental Health Specialist in this department I have the responsibility of the entire Food Program. As you can surmise I have had many interactions with both the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) as they oversee the Food Safety Program.

Senate Bill 338 provides a mechanism to address the overly burdensome current field survey process. This current survey process creates undue pressure on local inspectors to count as many critical and non-critical violations as possible, making a tallying system of violations the primary method to demonstrate their knowledge of the Food Code. This process leads to a dramatic (3 fold) increase in survey inspection times, manpower, costs and damages the relationships with industry operators. This approach deteriorates the collaborative efforts built between regulators and operators in order to gain compliance for food safety throughout the state of Ohio.

Food safety is imperative and Senate Bill 338 provides a better method to protect the public's health from foodborne illness by requiring Registered Environmental Health Specialists to pass a written or electronic test to demonstrate their knowledge of the food code.

I am a proponent of Senate Bill 338, this is a common sense approach to address a long standing issue. The safety and wellness of the residents of Ashtabula City are my responsibility and primary concern. Senate Bill 338 simply changes the way ODH & ODA will evaluate local health inspector's knowledge of the food code.

Thank you again for this opportunity to voice my support of Senate Bill 338.