



Cuyahoga County
Together We Thrive

Michele Pomerantz
Director, Regional Collaboration

Ohio Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee House Bill 201

**Opponent Testimony
Michele Pomerantz**

Director of Regional Collaboration for Cuyahoga County

Chair McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to House Bill 201.

In my role as Director of Regional Collaboration for Cuyahoga County, I advocate for the county and support our municipal partners. In advancing those interests, the county believes Home Rule Authority, enshrined in Ohio's Constitution, is critical for the success of local governments.

Exercising the powers of local self-governance – if they are not in conflict with state laws – allows for the enactment of policies and regulations tailored to individual communities. For example, there are 49 municipalities in Cuyahoga County, and each are unique in their own way. Local elected officials in those communities understand how best to govern in the interests of their own residents.

Unfortunately, HB 201 undermines Home Rule Authority. It's one of the latest examples in a series of bills in recent years that have sought to diminish local powers – a trend that Cuyahoga County finds troubling.

Specifically, the legislation would place prohibitions on local governments regarding the use of natural gas and propane in communities. This would deny local governments the ability and flexibility to shape energy policies that best

fit their constituents. Further, it erodes the principle that lies at the heart of local self-government. And eroding Home Rule Authority hampers the ability of local officials to enact and pursue policies that reflect not only their communities, but the will of the people they represent.

The county appreciates working with the Legislature to tackle issues essential to making life better for our residents and those across the state. However, we believe this is a solution in search of a problem that doesn't exist currently in Ohio as no counties here have embraced this concept and only a small number nationally are pursuing such policies.

Cuyahoga County respectfully requests the committee to vote "no" on HB 201.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.



Michele Pomerantz
Director of Regional Collaboration for Cuyahoga County