

Ohio House Finance Committee

House Bill 23

Interested Party Testimony

Laura Estandia

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Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee:

My name is Laura Estandia, and I am the Executive Director of Bike Miami Valley (Bike MV). Bike MV's mission is to advocate, promote and create opportunities for all forms of cycling in our region.

I write to share some concerns with language that has been added to HB23, the 2024-2025 Transportation Budget.

The language reads: "Compels ODOT to establish for the uniform application of the construction of bicycle lanes. Prohibits a bicycle lane in the middle of a street or highway in a municipality with a population over 300,000."

The development of bicycle infrastructure has come a long way in the last ten to twenty years. The standardization of bicycle facility design exists in numerous guides at the federal and national level. The Federal Highway Administration provides guidance on center-of-the-road protected bike lanes in their Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide. Likewise, ODOT has published guidance on bicycle facility design and maintenance in the Multimodal Design Guide. This guidance allows communities to follow safety standards, but pick the design that is best suited for their local context.

As we continue to redesign streets for the safety of more vulnerable road users, specifically for people biking and walking, it is important that local governments have the ability to respond to the local factors that contribute to unsafe roadways. The Federal Highway Administration's guidance on bicycle lanes as a proven safety countermeasure states that, "Bicycle lane design should vary according to roadway characteristics (e.g., motor vehicle volumes and speed) in order to maximize the facility's suitability for riders of all ages and

abilities.” Center protected bike lanes can be useful applications in the right setting where the space exists to design such a facility, and communities should have the flexibility to select this design option when appropriate.

We are urging the Ohio House Finance Committee to remove this language which limits local control of bicycle facility design.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony regarding Bike MV’s concerns with the current language in HB23.