



**Ohio House Finance Committee
Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 23
CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC
February 22nd, 2023**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Interested Party testimony on House Bill 23, the 2024-2025 State Transportation Budget.

CrossCountry Mortgage has a deep concern regarding language added to the budget intended to “Compel the Ohio Department of Transportation to establish uniform application of the construction of bicycle lanes and prohibit a bicycle lane in the middle of a street or highway in a municipality with a population over 300,000.”

The language above jeopardizes the City of Cleveland Superior Midway Avenue protected bicycle lane project, which would provide 2.4 miles of convenient and accessible transportation to Ohio’s largest jobs hub. This project is the result of 12 years of planning through collaboration between Cleveland residents, and public and private sectors, who have invested over \$25 million in the project that is determined to begin construction in 2025.

The Superior Midway project announcement provided additional incentive for CrossCountry Mortgage to relocate its headquarters from a suburban city to downtown Cleveland in the heart of the Superior Arts District. CrossCountry has relocated over 500 employees downtown Cleveland and has further added nearly 100 additional positions since its move in November of 2022. CrossCountry Mortgage, along with CC Superior Acquisition have plans to grow and expand this historically underfunded area with transformational mixed-use development. The feasibility and success of these investments will rely heavily on the completion of the Superior Midway Avenue Project.

The Superior Midway project is critical to the economic recovery and development of the Greater Cleveland Region, connecting residents to employment opportunities, attracting commercial developers and retail storefronts where there is a vast need, reducing traffic congestion, increasing roadway safety for cyclists and motorists, and improving the overall quality of life for residents.

On behalf of CrossCountry Mortgage, we respectfully urge the Committee to remove this provision from House Bill 23. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alex J. Ragon'.

Alex J. Ragon, Esq.
Chief Legal Counsel
CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC