



**House Finance Committee
Proponent Testimony, Sub. House Bill 33 (Edwards)
Jason Warner, Director of Strategic Engagement, Greater Ohio Policy Center
Thursday, April 20, 2023**

Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share proponent testimony on Substitute House Bill 33 (HB33).

Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) would like to thank the members of the House Finance Committee for all of the hard work that you have devoted to the development of the substitute version of HB33. **We are particularly grateful for the inclusion of level funding for the Brownfield Remediation (BRF) and the Building Demolition and Site Revitalization (Demo) programs.** The inclusion of this funding will ensure that Ohio remains proactive and competitive in the remediation and revitalization of blighted industrial and commercial properties across the state.

The initial investment of \$350 million in the BRF granted 188 cleanup grants, which is the final step in the remediation process to address environmental contamination and allow these brownfields to become new industrial and commercial sites, new housing, mixed-use space, recreational, or developable land. The additional investment ensures that the 125 projects which previously received assessment grants can proceed with applications for clean-up funds, while also permitting those projects which were shut-out of the first phase of grants the opportunity to compete for clean-up and assessment dollars.

Likewise, the \$150 million initial investment in the Demo program has resulted in the demolition of nearly 3,700 dilapidated commercial and residential buildings in 87 of Ohio's 88 counties. Communities across Ohio are eliminating these blighted and abandoned structures, creating new opportunities for economic and residential development and revitalizing neighborhoods. The additional investment guarantees that this important work can continue.

We once again thank you for all of your efforts in re-funding these important programs in Sub. HB33.

We also would like to draw the committee's attention to a possible drafting error in Sub. HB33. The budget language, found on page 4924, lines 151295-151304 maintains the as-introduced language creating the Housing Technical Assistance program through the Ohio Department of Development. However, the appropriation item (195420) is not included in the budget section (pages 4917-4923). GOPC has supported an allocation of \$5 million per year for this important program which seeks to assist local governments modernize regulations and zoning requirements related to housing and again urges the committee to include this funding in the budget.

Chairman Edwards and members of the Finance Committee, thank you again for allowing us to share our thoughts related to Sub. HB33. We strongly encourage your support and a yes vote on the substitute bill.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jason Warner".

Jason Warner
Director of Strategic Engagement
Greater Ohio Policy Center