



OHIO SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

June 12, 2024

Proponent Testimony Senate Bill 288

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on Senate Bill 288, which serves as the appropriations vehicle for the One-time Strategic Community Investment Fund (OTSCIF).

As the statewide association representing more than 730 cities and villages, the Ohio Municipal League was very encouraged when the idea of the OTSCIF surfaced, and we are pleased with the thoughtful process that was put in place to allocate this \$700 million.

The communities represented by OML are vital to the state's success. It is important to recognize that over 80% of Ohio's business activities occur in our municipalities and that your municipal partners are truly the economic engines of the state. Furthermore, roughly 8 million Ohioans live in a municipality.

The projects being funded through Senate Bill 288 cover a variety of important initiatives at the local level. In addition to municipal facilities such as offices, garages, and fire or police facilities, some of the funding benefits our communities through infrastructure projects such as water and sewer. Furthermore, this funding provides a needed financial resource as it relates to civic gathering places such as community centers, downtown districts, riverfronts, parks and trails. Some of these locations even honor individuals such as veterans and first responders, or mark events of historical significance.

We would be remiss not to mention that, in addition to the funding's direct benefit on the quality of life of municipal residents, it also stands to enhance tourist destinations and add to the vibrancy of our state's communities.

We commend the Senate for putting this thoughtful package together and look forward to its ultimate passage, along with the capital budget. Thank you all for the opportunity to share our views on Senate Bill 288.

Kent Scarrett
Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League