



*BEFORE THE HOUSE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON HB 115
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019*

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 115. My name is Kevin Boehner and I am the Director of Small Business and Workforce Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate, and we represent nearly 8,000 companies, of all sizes, that do business in Ohio. As part of my role at the Ohio Chamber, I serve as the Director of the Ohio Small Business Council. Our support for HB 115 is relative to the cost and resources that are attached to government bureaucracy and "red tape." Regulations impact businesses of all sizes, but severely impact small businesses who often times lack the resources to comply with the ever-changing regulatory environment.

That's why the Ohio Chamber has always supported maximizing regulatory benefits in the most cost-effective manner, and firmly believes that businesses should be able to operate and innovate without intrusive government mandates.

In 2011, we supported SB 2, which created the Common Sense Initiative Office (CSI). The changes this bill made to the rules process have resulted in a significant, positive difference in the way in which rules are developed and distributed to the general public. Specifically, the Business Regulation Impact Analysis required with each rule package is an important tool that ensures the real-world costs of implementing a new rule are known. Two years later, we supported SB 3, which made additional changes to the rule making process and brought no change rules under the same scrutiny as new rules.

Then, just last year, the legislature passed SB 221, which served as another vital step in rule and regulatory reform following in the same footsteps as SB 2 and SB 3.

Now, HB 115 would represent another huge step forward by requiring the reduction of regulatory restrictions by 30% by 2022. If agencies are unable to meet the reduction schedule put forth in this bill, they are not allowed to implement a new regulatory restriction without first eliminating two or more existing restrictions.

Regulations have accumulated over many decades, piling up over time. While CSI and the Business Impact Analysis ensure that the likely benefits and compliance costs of Ohio rules are evaluated, it's important not to forget that regulations have a greater effect on the economy than analysis of individual rules, or even rules packages, can express. We believe that HB 115 can help businesses who operate in Ohio by reducing the overall regulatory burden. At the same time, we acknowledge that a 30% reduction for each agency is going to be difficult to accomplish. However, in order to increase economic competitiveness, encourage free enterprise, and create the best economic environment for businesses to thrive in our state, reduction of overall regulations is an important objective.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.