



Testimony before the Ohio Senate Finance Committee

Submitted by Angela Krile, CEO, Krile Communications

Sugar Grove, Ohio

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Good morning, Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Burke, Ranking Member Sykes, and Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee. It is my honor to be here today as an interested party to testify regarding Substitute House Bill 166.

My name is Angela Krile, and I am a small business owner from a small town in southeastern Ohio called Sugar Grove, which is just on the border of Fairfield and Hocking Counties. I grew up there, attending Berne Union, as did my husband. Kindergarten through 12th grade are in one school building and our children are the fifth generation of Kriles to attend BU. I have great pride in my hometown, which is why when I started my business 9 years ago after commuting to Columbus for nearly 15 years, I decided to start it at home instead of Columbus.

It's important to note that I am not only a small business owner, but I have two boys who are ages 10 and 11, one of whom is in the midst of baseball season – and I am the assistant coach of his team. My husband is a high school math teacher and a farmer – and he is struggling with the rainy planting season like all Ohio farmers are right now. My father just finished radiation treatments and is cancer free and my mom is going home from a couple of weeks of being hospitalized due to back problems and a blood infection today. I sit on the boards of the Lancaster Festival, Fairfield Medical Center, the Lancaster-Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, Fairfield County College Bound,

Ohio University-Lancaster and our local CIC. I'm also a commissioner with the Ohio Expo Commission, I'm the Fairfield County United Way 2019 Campaign Chair, a Rotarian and a 4-H advisor.

I'm telling you all of this not to brag or to try to sound impressive, but to explain that I do not have spare time in my day – any day. I don't have hobbies. I'm either working, volunteering or taking care of my family. So, the fact that I am taking time to come to Columbus for the day to testify about this issue stresses how critical and important it is to me, to my business, to my employees and to my community.

Krile Communications is a full-service strategic communications firm. We provide messaging, public relations and marketing services to wide range of clients – from corporations and statewide organizations to small local non-profits such as the Fairfield County Foundation and the Afterschool Programs of Lancaster.

My business started with three clients. I had a cell phone, a laptop and a family that was incredibly supportive, and I started the company in my living room at home. Over the last 9 years, we have built our business to more than 60 clients, 5 full time employees and 2 college interns who work out of our office in Sugar Grove.

I started Krile Communications during the recession, and never dreamed or planned that it would grow to what it is today. And I can tell you without a doubt that the small business tax credit has played an important role in allowing me to hire employees to expand our work capacity and grow our business. In fact, I hired my first employee in 2013 and have added to our staff every year since – creating jobs that generate income taxes, but also generate secondary economic impact through the vendor partners we employ – like graphic designers, videographers, and printers.

In reading some of the media coverage about the proposed reduction in the small business tax credit, I noted some comments that were not only frustrating for me. Anyone who knows small business owners well know that they are some of the hardest working and most concerned citizens in our state. Saying that small business owners

are not using the tax credit to build their business or give back to their communities is just plain inaccurate and even a bit insulting. Here's a snapshot of my life:

- I have not given myself a raise since I started my business, yet I have worked hard to give my employees a raise annually and pay annual bonuses – sometimes more than once a year.
- We live in the same 1,500 square foot, three-bedroom, split-level house that we lived in when I started Krile Communications.
- And I have a good life. We are comfortable. We can buy our boys new baseball cleats or a trumpet to play in the marching band when they need it. We are not struggling, but we are not living an episode of “lifestyles of the rich and famous” either - by any means!

Like so many small business owners in Ohio, we intentionally choose to use our profits to give back to the community in which we live and work. There are too many examples to list here, but you need only look at the banners on the youth athletic fields or the logos on the t-shirts at 5k fundraisers across our communities to see the real, tangible impact of small businesses. I know at Berne Union, it's the handful of small business owners whose logos you see over and over again on the fences and t-shirts. Every dollar we save in running our business is another dollar that we can reinvest in our communities.

For example, Fairfield County College Bound is a program that works to help encourage and equip high school juniors and seniors to attend college. At Berne Union, Krile Communications has funded this program ENTIRELY for the last three years. We pay for students to meet one-on-one with a counselor for the purpose of college application submission, FAFSA assistance and scholarship application submission assistance. Additionally, we provide annual ACT prep workshops and College Bus Tours to campuses around central and southern Ohio. Many of these students had never been on a college campus before. We have provided these services to students free of charge – and have supported 267 students in the last three years – which is nearly every junior and senior at Berne Union. In a rural community with a high poverty rate, college can seem impossible for some kids, but through this program, we have helped these students not only improve their ACT scores, but to imagine the

possibilities of college and a bright future. Without our funding, Berne Union would not have a Fairfield County College Bound program.

At Krile Communications, our culture statement is: “We are strong women building a stronger community and making the world a better place.” Yes, we provide public relations and marketing services, but that is just a means to the end – to improve our world and build our community.

This small business tax credit is not about “lining the pockets of rich small business owners.” It is about providing a valuable financial tool for business owners to take more risks to grow their operations, to employ more Ohioans and to give more back to their communities. Increasing this tax is akin to taking a fire extinguisher to a flame that has sparked the successful growth and expansion of countless businesses across our state – including businesses like Krile Communications.

I respectfully request that proposed tax increase on small pass-through businesses in Substitute HB 166 be removed from the legislation, leaving the Small Business Investor Income Deduction intact as it currently stands. Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. I’d be happy to answer any questions.