



Anthony T. Hairston

Cuyahoga County Council-District 10

Committee Chair: Community Development

Committee Vice Chair: Economic Development & Planning

Committee Member: Public Safety & Justice Affairs

Committee Member: Finance & Budgeting

June 11, 2015

Dear Ohio Legislator,

We are writing today to strongly urge you to vigorously oppose House Bill 180 and Senate Bill 152, which would eliminate local control over public contracting decisions. These bills seek to remove the ability of those governments closest and most accountable to the people to determine how best to benefit the residents they serve. Instead, these bills place the short term interest of a small group of lobbyist above the long term interest of the State of Ohio and its residents. Communities across Ohio face different challenges and have different opportunities; municipalities need to be able to appropriately respond to those challenges and opportunities, and to offer solutions specifically tailored to the particular needs of their constituents. The state should not impose “one size fits all” regulations that ignore this fact.

Local governments have carefully considered the alternatives and have determined for themselves that the benefit of public investment should positively impact the Triple Bottom Line of the community they represent (i.e., social impact, environmental impact, and financial impact). Communities that have instituted this type of reinvestment in their skilled workforce acknowledge that it is more fiscally responsible and sustainable to include community benefits within each public spend. House Bill 180 and Senate Bill 152 take away opportunities for local residents to participate in the development of their own community.

Local hiring requirements in public contracting have been inaccurately characterized as a burden on the contracting industry when, in fact, the community benefits these policies provide result in benefits to contractors. Local hiring serves to increase the strength, capacity, and diversity of the local labor market. Not only does this improve the local labor resources available to public contractors; it also increases the capacity for public investment as a whole by shoring up the economic power of the community and advancing the local buy-in for such investment. It would be short-sighted to abandon these benefits.

We submit that, in the interest of local control and the financial strength of our communities, there is no other reasonable option but to oppose House Bill 180 and Senate Bill 152. Denying municipalities the right to determine their own needs, and the optimum methods to address those needs, violates the spirit of home rule and eliminates a vital tool for long term economic resurgence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony T. Hairston".

Anthony T. Hairston

Cc: The Honorable Armond Budish, Executive of Cuyahoga County
The Honorable Frank Jackson, Mayor of City of Cleveland
The Honorable Gary Norton, Mayor of City of East Cleveland
The Honorable Dennis Wilcox, Mayor of City of Cleveland Heights
The Honorable Susan K. Infeld, Mayor of City of University Heights
The Honorable John M. Licastro, Mayor of the Village of Bratenahl
Cuyahoga County Council Members
Cleveland City Council Members
East Cleveland City Council Members
Cleveland Heights City Council Members
University Heights City Council Members
Village of Bratenahl Council Members