



Ohio Municipal League

Our Cities and Villages ★ Bringing Ohio to Life

March 24, 2015

Chairman Frank LaRose
Senate State & Local Government Committee

Dear Chairman LaRose and Senate Committee members:

The Ohio Municipal League would like to share with you and members of the Senate State & Local Government Committee our support for legislation before your committee, SB 95.

As committee members are aware, SB 95 would allow municipal corporations and townships with populations over 35,000 to create a designated outdoor refreshment area in which individuals will be exempt from Ohio's open container law, within the designated area. Many League members have expressed a great deal of interest in this new resource to provide an enhanced social experience for residents and non residents while encouraging greater opportunities for economic development in their communities.

Although the Ohio Municipal League supports the legislation, we have been contacted by concerned municipal leaders whose population levels are below 35,000 residents and would be excluded from the current proposal. Officials from these communities would appreciate the same ability as other municipalities to create a unique entertainment experience and encourage more tourism and interest in their community's activities such as outdoor concerts and other social events, through the use of refreshment areas being discussed.

For this reason, we ask committee members to consider amending the current language by removing the arbitrarily population requirement included in SB 95. Ohio's cities and villages, of all sizes, have a long history of providing a safe and attractive environment for residents and visitors alike who attend entertainment and other civic events in their communities. Because the legislation is permissive and allows municipal corporations the ability to establish requirements within a newly created refreshment area and to modify conditions when appropriate, our municipal safety forces would have the authority they need to ensure the public's safety at events or circumstances where a refreshment area would be established.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you and members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight committee OML's support for SB 95 and the desire for communities of all sizes interested in expanding economic partnerships through social and civic entertainment venues the same statutory ability uniformly.

Sincerely,

Susan Cave
OML Executive Director