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Ohio SENATE Committee Testimony

In Ohio, you have the right to testify **or** submit written-only testimony on bills in Statehouse committees.

(In-person testimony is preferred if possible)

Has an Ohio Senate committee scheduled a hearing on a bill you care about? Follow this process:

HOW TO SUBMIT TESTIMONY (in-person OR written-only):

1.) Make sure the committee is accepting the type of testimony you want to submit.

- Types of testimony:
  - **Proponent** (Supporter)
  - **Opponent** (You oppose the full bill)
  - **Interested Party** (You have concerns about pieces of the bill but don't want to support or oppose it yet)
- If they aren't accepting your type of testimony at this hearing, they likely will at the next one!

2.) Write your testimony

- See **testimony template below.**

3.) Upload your testimony to the committee website — whether you're testifying in-person or not

- Upload it at least 24 hours before the committee start time
  - *EXAMPLE: If the testimony starts at 3:00 pm on Wednesday, upload your testimony by 3:00 pm on TUESDAY*
- Make sure to fill out all the questions provided when you upload your testimony
  - *This replaces the "witness slip" previously used by Statehouse committees*

3.5) HOW TO UPLOAD your testimony to the Committee website

- https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/committees/senate-committees
- Click on your bill's committee
- Click "meetings"
- Click the date of the hearing you're submitting testimony for
- Click "upload testimony"

- Fill out the witness information and upload your testimony

(If you're submitting written-only testimony, that's it! You're done! You officially testified written-only. If you're testifying in-person, see below.)

4.) Arrive at the Statehouse before the committee is scheduled to begin.

- **Parking recommendations:**
  - The Ohio Statehouse underground garage
    - Located underneath the Statehouse, 1 Capitol Square, Columbus, 43215
  - Columbus Commons Underground Parking Garage
    - 191 S. Third Street
  - Columbus Commons Main Garage (above ground)
    - 55 E. Rich Street & 56 E. Main Street

- **NOTE:** You'll need to go through a metal detector when you arrive at the Statehouse.
  - You'll put your bags, purse, phone, keys, and other items through a metal detector (similar to the airport but not as intense)
  - You will personally pass through a metal detector as well

- **Worried about getting lost in the Statehouse?** You can ask the security guards/state troopers at the metal detector to direct you to the committee room

- **NOTE:** Signs ARE permitted inside the Statehouse, but they are not permitted in the committee room

5.) Bring a printed copy of your testimony with you to read in front of the committee
- You **do not** have to read your testimony word for word! Many people don't!)

6.) You may also want to bring copies to hand to reporters — you can contact reporters ahead of time to let them know you (and your group) will be testifying!

7.) AFTER YOU ARE FINISHED SPEAKING:
- **Legislators may ask you questions.** They are more likely to ask questions if you provide data/statistics or present yourself as having professional experience related to the bill. This can be awesome! But be prepared to back up your testimony!
- **After each question, try to** start your response with the words, "Through the Chair, to the Senator…"

AFTER THE COMMITTEE:

After the committee is over, we also recommend taking some additional steps to increase the impact of your testimony:

- **Contact the committee members** (be polite!), remind them about your testimony, and offer to meet/speak with them to discuss the issue further.
  - **SPREADSHEET: State House & Senate CONTACT Information** (2025 - 2026)

        - Check out the tabs to find contact info for the committee where you testified

- **Find your testimony on the Ohio legislature website**, and share it on social media!
    - Urge others to contact the committee too
    - **How to find testimonies online after a committee hearing**
        - All written and in-person testimonies are posted online and shareable

- **Create a video clip** of yourself testifying, and share it on social media!
    - Urge others to contact the committee too
    - **Slideshow —** How to pull video clips from OhioChannel.org
    - **Document —** How to pull video clips from OhioChannel.org

TESTIMONY TEMPLATE:

Chair _____, Vice Chair _____, Ranking Member _____, and members of the _____Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is _____. I am [*basic bio about who you are*]. I am strongly opposed to (*or I strongly support*) [*Bill Number*].

[*Then tell them why! Make it short and sweet - a few paragraphs is perfect. Tell a personal story. Or explain why your job experience gives you this perspective on the bill. Maybe cite some statistics or case studies to back up your claims*]

I ask you to consider my testimony and vote [*NO/YES*] on this [*harmful/dangerous/important/life-saving/etc.*] bill. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

[If you are testifying in-person] I will now take any questions you may have.