



A program of
GREATER
CLEVELAND
PARTNERSHIP



June 25, 2015

The Honorable Keith Faber
President
Ohio Senate

The Honorable Cliff Rosenberger
Speaker
Ohio House of Representatives

President Faber and Speaker Rosenberger:

The Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) has had a longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion; most notably through the work of the Commission on Economic Inclusion, a program of GCP. With more than 100 members in Northeast Ohio, the Commission's efforts are aimed at growing minority-owned businesses, increasing access to jobs that pay well, and including more minorities in the senior management and board leadership of companies and organizations. Success means that minorities will more fully participate in and contribute to the benefits of economic development in the region.

As members of the Commission and GCP, we are strongly opposed to HB 180 and SB 152 that would prohibit local residency hiring requirements for public construction contracts. We believe this legislation would undermine the work that we have done with the City of Cleveland and other private sector partners – including contractors – to establish and invest in a strategy that is now viewed as a model for engaging local workforce and increasing training and hiring strategies.

The most pressing element that our businesses face is talent. Strong and vibrant communities are fueled by a talented and diverse workforce. That is why many civic and business leaders supported and signed on to the *Community Benefit Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (CBA/MOU)* with the City of Cleveland in 2013. It was and continues to be an opportunity to work collectively on efforts that fuel economic growth and to harness that growth to create a more equitable and inclusive local economy. The Construction Diversity and Inclusion collaborative, which represents 16 of the most diverse and largest companies/organizations in the region, furthers this work to support workforce strategies, apprentice opportunities, minority contracting and local hiring in the construction industry.

HB 180 and SB 152 damage the foundation of this work. It weakens our public-private partnership that is focused on creating greater workforce, community and economic development opportunities, which leads to real civic and economic benefit. For all these reasons, we urge you not to support this legislation. We look forward to further discussion on this issue.

Respectfully,

