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June 4, 2015

The Honorable Cliff Rosenberger  
Speaker  
Ohio House of Representatives

The Honorable Keith Faber  
President  
Ohio Senate

Speaker Rosenberger and President Faber:

The Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) and its members join with the City of Cleveland in expressing our strong opposition to HB 180 and SB 152. These bills seek to prohibit local governments from requiring a contractor to employ a certain number of residents within a geographic area for a construction project or improvement. We fear this will hamper local efforts in Northeast Ohio where Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) are in place. CBAs are an important tool for regional and local governments to ensure that public expenditures result in real community gains such as an inclusive workforce, apprentice opportunities, minority contracting and local hiring.

GCP and its members have had a long standing commitment to diversity and inclusion strategies in our region. An inclusive workforce is critical to our bottom line. We work very closely with the City of Cleveland and other key stakeholders –including contractors and developers – to create CBAs and other workforce development initiatives that yield a high return on investment for our community but also create opportunities for a skilled and diverse workforce to have better access to economic opportunity.

HB 180 and SB 152 have the potential to destroy the benefit to residents on these types of projects and, more importantly, interferes with home rule – where locals make decisions on what is best for their community without intrusion from the state. For these reasons, we urge you not to support these bills. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to further discussion on this issue in the coming weeks.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Roman", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph D. Roman  
President & CEO