OCG Bill Review — H.B. 188 (Ohio-Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership)

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Bill Review No. 004 · RL-2026-044 · 11/16/26 · Version 1.0

Bottom line: H.B. 188 creates a 17-member state study body, the Ohio-Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership, to look at ways to expand trade, investment and research ties between Ohio and Israel. The introduced bill carried $5 million a year for two years. A House Development Committee amendment removed the money, and the House passed the bill 73–10 in November 2025.

The bill now creates the partnership but names no agency to house or staff it and sets up no fund. The sponsors told both committees it would be housed in the Department of Development; the text does not say so. Its seats include one for a specific named nonprofit, Ohio Jewish Communities, and the House changed the bill so that majority leaders, not minority leaders, choose the minority-party legislators.

The bill drew 111 committee witness entries across both chambers from 98 individuals: 33 proponent entries and 73 opponent entries, plus four sponsor appearances and one interested party. All 73 opponents filed at one of two hearings: the last House hearing before the committee vote, or the May 2026 Senate hearing. Senate Finance holds its third hearing on November 17, 2026, in the lame-duck session. Section 7 identifies seven drafting questions.

Item	Detail
Bill	Am. H.B. 188, 136th General Assembly — "to create the Ohio Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership" (new R.C. 122.1712)
Sponsors	Reps. Thomas Hall (R-46th District) and Eric Synenberg (D-21st District); 40 House cosponsors as passed
House action	Introduced Mar 19, 2025; four Development hearings; reported as amended 9–2 on Nov 4, 2025; passed 73–10 on Nov 5, 2025
Senate action	Referred to Finance Nov 18, 2025; hearings Mar 3 and May 12, 2026; 3rd hearing Nov 17, 2026
Companion	S.B. 200 (Sens. Weinstein, D, and Brenner, R), introduced May 14, 2025 with the same $5 million-a-year appropriation; one Senate Finance hearing (Oct 21, 2025)
Version reviewed	As Passed by the House, with LSC's bill analysis and LBO's fiscal note (both for that version)
Lame-duck flag	Yes. The bill needs Senate passage, and House concurrence if the Senate amends it, before the General Assembly ends.
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1. What the bill does, in plain language

1. **Creates a study body.** The Ohio-Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership would study ways to advance trade and investment, "policy issues of mutual interest," business and academic exchanges, "mutual economic support," mutual investment in Ohio and Israeli infrastructure, specific industries and technologies, partnerships among Ohio, Israel and other nations (the text names Africa, Asia, Europe, the Gulf Cooperation Council states and Oceania), and "other issues as determined by the partnership."[1]
2. **Sets its membership at 17.**
   - Six legislators: three senators named by the Senate President and three representatives named by the Speaker, two from the majority party and one from the minority in each chamber. Each must have "knowledge of, or current or past involvement in, organizations that promote Israeli affairs," or an interest in Ohio-Israel trade relations.
   - Eight governor's appointees, confirmed by the Senate: one from a state university; one from the Ohio Chamber of Commerce; one from the nonprofit Ohio Jewish Communities; one from JobsOhio; two from JobsOhio regional affiliates; and two from local chambers of commerce, the Ohio Business Roundtable, the Ohio Manufacturers' Association or Ohio Life Sciences.
   - Three ex officio members: the Chancellor of Higher Education, the Director of Development and the Lieutenant Governor.
3. **Sets how it works.** Members serve without pay but may be reimbursed for expenses "within the limits of funds available to the partnership." The partnership elects its own chair, may form subcommittees, holds hearings around the state, and reports to the Governor and legislative leaders within 15 months and every year after.
4. **Contains no appropriation, but is not cost-free.** The passed bill contains no appropriation and does not expressly authorize the partnership to enter agreements or make investments. The Legislative Budget Office still expects some state costs for member reimbursements and other partnership expenses. The bill names no funding source or agency responsible for those costs.

2. Provision by provision

No current law covers this subject, so the table compares the introduced and House-passed versions. Line numbers refer to the As Passed by the House text.

Topic (R.C. 122.1712, lines)	As Introduced	As Passed by the House
Purpose ((A), lines 6–26)	Study eight topic areas, including "other issues as determined by the partnership"	Same
Legislative members ((B)(1)–(2), lines 29–42)	Two senators named by the Senate President and one by the Senate Minority Leader; two representatives named by the Speaker and one by the House Minority Leader	Three senators named by the Senate President and three representatives named by the Speaker, two majority and one minority in each
Governor's appointees ((B)(3), lines 43–64)	Eight, with Senate consent; seats for a state university, Ohio Chamber, Ohio Jewish Communities, JobsOhio, two JobsOhio regional affiliates, two business groups	Same
Ex officio ((B)(6), lines 65–68)	Chancellor, Director of Development, Lieutenant Governor	Same; division numbered (6) though (4) and (5) no longer exist
Terms and vacancies ((C), lines 69–77)	Legislators: two years or end of term; others: four years	Same
Expenses ((D), lines 78–81)	Reimbursement "within the limits of funds available to the partnership"	Same

[1] Ohio Legislative Service Commission, *Bill Analysis: H.B. 188, As Passed by the House*, 136th General Assembly, November 20, 2025, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=26825.

Topic (R.C. 122.1712, lines)	As Introduced	As Passed by the House
Meetings and report ((E)–(F), lines 82–96)	Hearings statewide; report within 15 months and annually	Same
Appropriation (Sections 2–3)	$5,000,000 GRF in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027 to the Department of Development, line item 1954A4[2]	Removed

3. Context

How the bill changed. Amendment AM_136_0572 made the two substantive changes: it deleted the $10 million appropriation, and it moved the appointment of the minority-party legislators from the minority leaders to the Senate President and the Speaker.[3] LBO issued a fiscal note on the bill "with AM0572" on June 13, 2025, two days after the committee's third hearing.[4] The committee record reviewed does not show the date the amendment was adopted. The committee reported the amended bill on November 4, 2025. Rep. Christine Cockley (D) was an original cosponsor and is not listed as a cosponsor of the passed bill; she voted no on the floor. Cosponsors grew from 11 to 40.

What the sponsors said. In both chambers, Rep. Hall testified that the partnership "will be housed under the Ohio Department of Development." His House testimony (April 9, 2025) also said the sponsors had "decided to add an appropriation of five million dollars from the GRF," describing the appropriation already in the introduced bill. His Senate testimony (March 3, 2026) repeats the Department of Development statement; by then the appropriation had been removed.[5] Neither the introduced nor the passed text assigns the partnership to any agency.

Related law and bills.

- **Ohio Ireland Trade Commission (R.C. 149.60).** Both sponsors cite it as the model. It has nine members, an almost identical purpose list and the same reporting schedule. Unlike H.B. 188, it may accept gifts, grants and bequests, which go into an Ohio Ireland trade commission fund created in the state treasury. Its community seat is for a member representing "Irish American communities" generally, not a named organization.[6] LSC's boards-and-commissions listing shows no staff assistance specified for it.[7]
- **Sub. H.B. 291 (Ohio International Trade Commission).** The introduced bill named Japan, Ireland and Israel; the House-passed version lets the commission designate up to eight regions and creates its own fund. The House passed it June 9, 2026, and it was introduced in the Senate June 11.[8] Rep. Synenberg is a cosponsor. The House-passed version has up to 12 voting members, can accept gifts and grants into its

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[2] Ohio House of Representatives, *H.B. 188, As Introduced*, 136th General Assembly, March 19, 2025, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/hb188/00_IN/pdf/.

[3] Ohio House of Representatives, Amendment No. AM_136_0572 to H.B. 188 As Introduced, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/hb188/00_IN/amendments/AM_136_0572/pdf.

[4] Ohio Legislative Service Commission, Legislative Budget Office, *Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement: H.B. 188 (with AM0572)*, June 13, 2025, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=25635.

[5] Rep. Thomas Hall, sponsor testimony on H.B. 188, House Development Committee, April 9, 2025, and Senate Finance Committee, March 3, 2026.

[6] Ohio Rev. Code § 149.60, https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-149.60.

[7] Ohio Legislative Service Commission, "Ohio Ireland Trade Commission," Boards and Commissions, updated February 10, 2025, https://lsc.ohio.gov/publications/boards-and-commissions/ohio-ireland-trade-commission.

[8] Ohio General Assembly, "House Bill 291: Status," accessed November 16, 2026, https://ohiohouse.gov/legislation/136/hb291/status; *Sub. H.B. 291, As Passed by the House*, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/hb291/02_PH/pdf/.

own fund, and must report each gift, grant or bequest it receives, with sources and amounts; like H.B. 188, it names no agency to house it.[9] One document filed as opposition to H.B. 188 is headed as testimony on H.B. 291.

- **How the three bodies compare.**

Feature	H.B. 188 (As Passed by the House)	Sub. H.B. 291 (As Passed by the House)	Ohio Ireland Trade Commission (R.C. 149.60)
Scope	Israel, plus multilateral partnerships involving Israel	Up to eight regions designated by the commission	Ireland
Members	17	Up to 12 voting, plus nonvoting members	9
Named private organization	Ohio Jewish Communities; Ohio Chamber of Commerce	Ohio Chamber of Commerce (nonvoting)	None named for the community seat
Fund; gifts and grants	None	Yes	Yes
Agency named to house or staff it	None	None	None
Funding report	None	Annual list of gifts and grants received, with sources and amounts	None

- **S.B. 200.** The Senate companion, with the original $5 million-a-year appropriation, has had one sponsor hearing.[10]
- **Existing ties cited in testimony.** Sponsors and proponents cite a 1990–2011 Israeli trade office with the Department of Development, the Ohio-Israel Agriculture and Cleantech initiative, the Dayton Region Israel Trade Alliance (2008) and Cleveland's sister-city tie with Beit She'an. These are reported as testimony; OCG did not verify them independently.

When	Event
Nov 17, 2026	Senate Finance 3rd hearing
May 12, 2026	Senate Finance 2nd hearing: 60 witness submissions
Mar 3, 2026	Senate Finance 1st hearing, sponsor testimony
Nov 18, 2025	Referred to Senate Finance
Nov 10, 2025	Introduced in the Senate
Nov 5, 2025	House passes 73–10
Nov 4, 2025	House Development reports amended bill 9–2
Oct 29, 2025	House Development 4th hearing: 37 witness entries, 36 opponents
Jun 11, 2025	House Development 3rd hearing; no witnesses listed
May 7, 2025	House Development 2nd hearing: 10 proponents
Apr 9, 2025	House Development 1st hearing, sponsor testimony
Mar 19, 2025	Introduced

4. Who is for and against, and why

The committee record lists 111 witness entries: four sponsor appearances, 33 proponent entries, 73 opponent entries and one interested party.[11] These came from 98 individuals; 13 filed in both chambers. Counted once

[9] *Sub. H.B. 291, As Passed by the House*, 136th General Assembly, https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/hb291/02_PH/html/.

[10] Ohio General Assembly, "Senate Bill 200: Committee Activity," accessed November 16, 2026, https://www.ohiohouse.gov/legislation/136/sb200/committee; Ohio Legislative Service Commission, *Bill Analysis: S.B. 200, As Introduced*, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=25723.

each, that is 27 proponents, 68 opponents, the two sponsors and one interested party. Entries are not a measure of public opinion. Appendix A lists every entry; OCG reviewed all 110 posted documents. Reasons below are paraphrased from the documents themselves; claims of fact in testimony, by either side, are reported as the witness's statement, not verified by OCG.

Affected parties were not contacted for comment before this release. Positions reflect the public record as of November 16, 2026. Responses received later will be added in a revised version.

Hearing	Sponsors	Proponents	Opponents	Interested party
House Development, Apr 9, 2025	2	—	—	—
House Development, May 7, 2025	—	10	—	—
House Development, Oct 29, 2025	—	1	36	—
Senate Finance, Mar 3, 2026	2	—	—	—
Senate Finance, May 12, 2026	—	22	37	1
Total	**4**	**33**	**73**	**1**

Proponents

Who	Stated reasons
Sponsors Reps. Hall (R) and Synenberg (D)	Israeli start-ups expanding abroad do not consider Ohio; a formal partnership would change that. Israel's start-up economy, NASDAQ listings and R&D presence of U.S. firms; 26 states and D.C. have similar agreements; the Ireland commission is the model.
Business and economic-development groups: Ohio Chamber of Commerce; Ohio Life Sciences; Youngstown Business Incubator; Dayton Development Coalition; Heartland Ventures; Negev Foundation; Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne	Trade and investment growth; Israeli strengths in medical technology, water, agriculture, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing; existing regional ties. The Ohio Chamber cites Ohio Department of Development export figures for Israel; the Youngstown Business Incubator says it is working with four Israeli start-ups.
Jewish community organizations: Ohio Jewish Communities; Jewish Federations of North America; Jewish Federations of Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus and Greater Toledo; American Jewish Committee; StandWithUs	Economic opportunity and existing community and civic ties. Ohio Jewish Communities notes the companion S.B. 200 and lists business groups it says support the bill. JewishColumbus emphasizes defense technology, cybersecurity and advanced manufacturing.
CUFI Action Fund; Pastor Juan Rivera	Economic opportunity and the U.S.-Israel relationship.
Individuals (academics, local officials, residents)	Economic growth; one, a former Montgomery County commissioner, describes the Dayton region's Israel trade alliance after the 2008 recession.

Opponents

Who	Stated reasons
Organizations: American Muslims for Palestine–Columbus; YUSRA; Columbus CPUSA; Northwest Ohio Peace Coalition; Cleveland Peace Action; Ohio Divest; Cleveland DSA; CAIR Ohio	Israel's conduct in Gaza and the West Bank, which many describe as genocide or war crimes; state resources should go to Ohio needs; possible defense and surveillance focus; reimbursement language could draw on state funds.

[11] Ohio General Assembly, "House Bill 188: Committee Activity," accessed November 16, 2026, https://www.ohiohouse.gov/legislation/136/hb188/committee; Ohio Senate, "Finance Committee: H.B. 188," https://ohiosenate.gov/committees/finance/legislation/hb188.

Who	Stated reasons
Individual Ohioans (most opponent submissions)	Most raise public money, which many tied to the original $10 million (the October 2025 House testimony came while it was still in the bill); most raise oversight, transparency or accountability; many raise Israel's conduct in Gaza. Others argue foreign relations are a federal role, that the Constitution bars states from alliances and gives Congress foreign commerce, that a single-country commission is a poor way to build trade, or that legislators would be chosen for affinity with Israel. Twelve House submissions share near-identical closing language, asking members to put "the people of Ohio who elected you—not foreign lobbyists" first.

Interested party: one submission (May 12, 2026), filed under the name Shlomo Kai, is a capabilities sheet for ADOR Ltd., an Israeli company listing drone, counter-drone, electronic-warfare and maritime autonomous systems. It takes no stated position.

Committee-record discrepancies. The House listing for Jay Qutiefan opens a document written by Jawhara Qutiefan; the Senate listing for Jawhara Qutiefan opens one that begins "My name is Jay Qutiefan." The House listing for Chester Buchanan opens a document signed "Cheston Buchanan" that closes by asking members to vote no on S.B. 200, the companion bill. The House document listed for Abby Mahmoud is headed as testimony on H.B. 291 and mentions H.B. 188 twice. Dan Foley and Pastor Rivera are listed under the organization "Ohio Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership," the name of the body the bill would create; both say they testify personally. The House page's download link for Armando Telles (Oct 29, 2025) leads back to the committee page itself; no document is posted. Each document is counted under the hearing for which the committee listed it.

Affected interests with no public position found

Interest	Provision affecting them
Department of Development	The sponsors say the partnership would be housed there; the Director is an ex officio member. No testimony from the department.
JobsOhio and its regional affiliates	Three governor's seats. No testimony from JobsOhio.
Chancellor of Higher Education; state universities	Ex officio seat and one university seat
Ohio Business Roundtable; Ohio Manufacturers' Association	Eligible for two business seats. Ohio Jewish Communities lists the Roundtable as a supporter; neither group testified.
Lieutenant Governor	Ex officio seat

5. Pros and cons by lens

These are the arguments each camp would likely make, not documented positions and not OCG positions.

	Conservative lens	Liberal lens
Pros	Strengthens economic ties with a close U.S. ally. Pro-business and pro-innovation. Costs little now that the appropriation is gone; it studies and reports rather than spends.	Bipartisan economic development, with Democratic as well as Republican sponsors. Focus on medical technology, water and clean energy. Builds on existing civic and university ties.
Cons	Another state commission with an open-ended mandate. Foreign relations belong to the federal government. Picks one country for special treatment; some "Ohio first" voices would rather the state focus at home.	Ties the state to a government whose conduct in Gaza many witnesses condemn. Possible defense and surveillance focus. A statutory seat for one community organization. Minority-party members chosen by majority leaders.
Likely split	Pro-Israel and pro-business conservatives vs. limited-government and non-interventionist conservatives	Pro-Israel and economic-development Democrats vs. human-rights and anti-war progressives

Common ground in the record: both chambers' sponsors are bipartisan (Hall, R, and Synenberg, D, in the House; Weinstein, D, and Brenner, R, on S.B. 200), and the floor vote drew yes votes from both parties; all ten no votes were Democrats. **Points either lens could raise:** the bill creates a state body with no named home, staff or fund, and an open-ended topic list.

6. Process record

Almost all of H.B. 188's witness record came at two hearings, one in each chamber, and all of the opposition arrived at those two. Hearing and witness counts measure public access, not how closely members examined the bill.

Metric	H.B. 188
Hearings	House Development: 4 (Apr 9, May 7, Jun 11, Oct 29, 2025). Senate Finance: 2 so far (Mar 3, May 12, 2026), 3rd on Nov 17, 2026
Testimony	111 witness entries from 98 individuals: 4 sponsor, 33 proponent, 73 opponent, 1 interested party; 110 documents posted
Timing	All 36 House opponents filed at the Oct 29, 2025 hearing, six days before the committee vote. LBO's fiscal note on the bill with the amendment that removed the appropriation is dated June 13, 2025; many October opponents still cited the $10 million.
Committee to floor	Reported Nov 4, 2025; passed Nov 5, 2025
House committee vote	9–2 (Nov 4, 2025). Yes: Demetriou, Fischer, Hoops, M. Johnson, LaRe, Lorenz, T. Mathews, Santucci (R); Brownlee (D). No: Abdullahi, Sigrist (D)[12]
House floor vote	73–10 (Nov 5, 2025). Yes: 58 Republicans, 15 Democrats. No: 10 Democrats (Abdullahi, Cockley, Grim, Lett, McNally, J. Miller, Mohamed, Rader, Troy, E. White)[13]
Fiscal note	LBO says the state "would bear some small cost" for reimbursements and other expenses. It names no agency or fund to bear it.[14]
Lame-duck or omnibus	Lame duck: yes. Omnibus: no
Comment requests	None sent before release (2026 lame-duck reviews; see section 4)

7. Drafting issues and implementation risks

Sections 3 and 7 reflect OCG's reading of the bill text and current law. They have not been reviewed by an attorney and are not legal advice.

[12] Ohio General Assembly, "House Bill 188: Votes," accessed November 16, 2026, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/136/hb188/votes.

[13] Ohio General Assembly, "House Bill 188: Votes," accessed November 16, 2026, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/136/hb188/votes.

[14] Ohio Legislative Service Commission, Legislative Budget Office, *Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement: H.B. 188, As Passed by the House*, November 5, 2025, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/download?key=26513.

The text raises seven drafting questions. None is rated High. Line numbers refer to the As Passed by the House text. An issue describes what the text does or leaves open, not anyone's intent.

#	Issue (R.C. 122.1712, lines)	Type	What the text does	Interests affected	Severity
1	**No home, staff or fund.** (D), lines 78–81; whole section	Textual	Creates a 17-member body that must hold hearings statewide and report annually, but names no agency to house or staff it and creates no fund. Reimbursement is limited to "funds available to the partnership," and the bill gives it no way to receive funds; the Ireland commission it is modeled on has a fund for gifts and grants. The sponsors' statement that it will be housed in the Department of Development is not in the text.	Members; Department of Development; taxpayers	Medium
2	**Named private organization seat.** (B)(3)(c), lines 52–53	Textual	Reserves a governor's seat for "the nonprofit corporation Ohio Jewish communities," a specific private organization, with no successor clause; the Ohio Chamber seat in the next division has one. If the organization renames, merges or dissolves, the seat's status is unclear. The Ireland commission uses a general description ("Irish American communities"). The text does not say whether the organization nominates the appointee or the Governor chooses freely. Naming an organization is a design choice; it is not evidence of improper influence.	Ohio Jewish Communities; the Governor; other community organizations	Low–Medium
3	**Open-ended mandate.** (A)(2), (5), (8), lines 11, 15–16, 26	Textual	Directs study of "policy issues of mutual interest," "mutual investment in the infrastructure of Ohio and Israel," and "other issues as determined by the partnership," with no limit tied to Ohio's economic development.	Legislature; public	Low–Medium
4	**Reporting design.** (F), lines 91–96	Textual	Requires an annual report to the Governor and legislative leaders but does not require it to be published, set measures of results, or provide for periodic legislative evaluation. The bill's silence on open meetings, public records, ethics and sunset review does not exempt the partnership from those general laws; which of them apply is an open question (section 8).	Public; legislature	Low–Medium
5	**Legislator qualifications.** (B)(1)–(2), lines 29–42	Textual	Legislative members must have knowledge of or involvement in "organizations that promote Israeli affairs," or an interest in Ohio-Israel trade. The terms are undefined and not measurable, so the requirement does not limit who may be named. Opponents read it as choosing members for their views.	Legislative leaders; members	Low
6	**Numbering error.** (B), lines 35, 65	Textual	The governor's appointees are division (B)(3) and the ex officio members are (B)(6); there is no (B)(4) or (5), left over from the House amendment. A stray "(2)" sits on its own line. Cross-references in (C) still work.	Code revisers	Low

#	Issue (R.C. 122.1712, lines)	Type	What the text does	Interests affected	Severity
7	**Constitutional objections raised in testimony.** Whole section	Legal question	Opponents argue the bill conflicts with the U.S. Constitution. Three separate doctrines are involved: Article I, Section 10's bar on state treaties and alliances and its consent requirement for agreements or compacts with a foreign power; Congress's power over foreign commerce; and federal foreign-affairs preemption (*Zschernig v. Miller*, 1968; *Crosby v. National Foreign Trade Council*, 2000). On its face the bill creates a study body and authorizes no agreement, compact or expenditure, which narrows the first objection. It does not settle questions about what the partnership might later do. These are questions for counsel.	State; public	Low

Type: *Textual* = confirmed in the bill's text. *Implementation* = depends on rules or practice not yet written. *Legal question* = depends on how a court would apply other law. **Severity:** *High* = a demonstrated conflict affecting public property, statutory rights or public money at scale. *Medium* = fraud, accountability, liability or coordination exposure the text leaves open. *Low* = administrative.

8. Open questions

1. **Who will house, staff and pay for the partnership?** The sponsors say the Department of Development; the text does not. Will the Senate restore funding, as S.B. 200 would?
2. **What would this partnership do that existing institutions do not?** JobsOhio, the Department of Development, regional development groups and the existing Ohio-Israel initiatives cited in testimony already work on trade and investment. How would H.B. 188's partnership differ from Sub. H.B. 291's commission, which the House also passed and which could designate Israel as one of its regions?
3. **What results would the partnership be measured against,** and will its reports be public?
4. **Why is one organization named in statute when the Ireland commission uses a general description?** Does the organization nominate its member or does the Governor choose? What conflict-of-interest rules would apply to that member?
5. **Which general laws apply?** Open meetings, public records, records retention, ethics and sunset review each have their own tests; the bill addresses none of them.
6. **What sectors would the partnership focus on?** Proponents emphasize medical, water, agriculture, cybersecurity and defense technology; the one interested-party filing is a defense-technology firm's capabilities sheet.

About this review

What this is. OCG Bill Reviews are Research Center publications. They describe what a bill does, who has taken a position on it, and how it has moved through the General Assembly. Ohio Common Ground does not endorse or oppose legislation, candidates or parties. Nothing in this review is a recommendation to vote for or against this bill.

Version and date. This review covers Am. H.B. 188 As Passed by the House, as of November 16, 2026. Bills change through substitutes and amendments, so a later version may differ. Updates are posted at ohiocommonground.com.

Sources. Figures and statements of law come from primary government sources: bill text, analyses from LSC's Office of Research and Drafting, the Legislative Budget Office fiscal note, committee records and votes.

Statements in testimony are reported as the witness's statement. A figure that cannot be traced to a primary source is left out.

Method. Each review follows the OCG Legislative Review Standard:

1. Plain-language summary and provision-by-provision comparison against current law.
2. Context: earlier versions, related bills, recent law and litigation.
3. Positions on the record, from committee testimony and public statements. Interests affected by a provision are listed separately; being affected is not treated as support or opposition.
4. Lens analysis: the arguments conservative and liberal observers would likely make. These are hypothetical, attributed arguments, not documented positions and not OCG positions.
5. Process record: measurable facts about hearings, testimony, timing and sponsorship.
6. Drafting issues: places where the text is ambiguous, incomplete or leaves discretion unchecked, each tied to a section and line of the bill and labeled by type. An issue describes what the text does or leaves open, not anyone's intent.
7. Open questions the public record does not yet answer.

Not legal advice. This review is not legal advice. Anyone with a legal question should contact the responsible agency (here, the Ohio Department of Development) or an attorney.

Corrections. Report errors through ohiocommonground.com. Corrections made before release are logged in the revision history. Substantive changes after release are issued as a new version.

Sources

Primary

- Am. H.B. 188, As Passed by the House; As Introduced; As Reported by House Development
- LSC Bill Analysis, As Passed by the House (Nov 20, 2025); LBO Fiscal Note, As Passed by the House (Nov 5, 2025); LBO Fiscal Note with AM0572 (June 13, 2025); Amendment AM_136_0572
- H.B. 188 committee activity, Senate Finance H.B. 188 page, status and votes
- All 110 witness documents posted to the House Development and Senate Finance committee records, via the pages above
- Ohio Rev. Code § 149.60 (Ohio Ireland Trade Commission); LSC Boards and Commissions listing
- Sub. H.B. 291, As Passed by the House and status
- S.B. 200 committee activity and LSC analysis, As Introduced

Revision history

Version	Date	Change
1.0	11/16/26	Initial release.

Appendix A. Witness inventory

Every witness entry on the House Development and Senate Finance committee pages, as listed. Organization blanks are the record's. An asterisk marks a listed organization that differs from the document itself (see section 4).

#	Hearing	Witness	Organization	Position	Note
1	House Dev 04/09/25	Rep. Eric Synenberg	Ohio House	Sponsor	

#	Hearing	Witness	Organization	Position	Note
2	House Dev 04/09/25	Rep. Thomas Hall	Ohio House	Sponsor	
3	House Dev 05/07/25	Rick Carfagna	Ohio Chamber of Commerce	Proponent	
4	House Dev 05/07/25	Howie Beigelman	Ohio Jewish Communities	Proponent	
5	House Dev 05/07/25	Evan Remer	Jewish Columbus	Proponent	
6	House Dev 05/07/25	Boris Zilberman	CUFI Action Fund	Proponent	
7	House Dev 05/07/25	Elad Granot	John Carroll University	Proponent	
8	House Dev 05/07/25	Jason Wuliger	Jewish Federation of North America	Proponent	
9	House Dev 05/07/25	Barbara Ewing	Youngstown Business Incubator	Proponent	
10	House Dev 05/07/25	Willa Bluestone	Ohio Life Sciences	Proponent	
11	House Dev 05/07/25	Dan Foley	Ohio Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership*	Proponent	
12	House Dev 05/07/25	Pastor Juan Rivera	Ohio Israel Trade and Innovation Partnership*	Proponent	
13	House Dev 10/29/25	Jay Qutiefan	American Muslims for Palestine-Columbus	Opponent	Document authored by Jawhara Qutiefan
14	House Dev 10/29/25	Jessica Eberly	Resident	Opponent	
15	House Dev 10/29/25	Jack Johnson	Resident	Opponent	
16	House Dev 10/29/25	Aryel Clarke	Resident	Opponent	
17	House Dev 10/29/25	Austin Powers	Resident	Opponent	
18	House Dev 10/29/25	Raul Montejo	Resident	Opponent	
19	House Dev 10/29/25	Rana Abuhashim	YUSRA	Opponent	
20	House Dev 10/29/25	Nahla Saleh	Resident	Opponent	
21	House Dev 10/29/25	Chester Buchanan	Resident	Opponent	Signed ‘Cheston Buchanan’; closes on S.B. 200
22	House Dev 10/29/25	Samantha Baker	Columbus CPUSA	Opponent	
23	House Dev 10/29/25	Mathew Brown		Opponent	
24	House Dev 10/29/25	Abby Mahmoud	Resident	Opponent	Headed as testimony on H.B. 291
25	House Dev 10/29/25	Heather Cantino		Opponent	

#	Hearing	Witness	Organization	Position	Note
26	House Dev 10/29/25	Peggy Gish	Resident	Opponent	
27	House Dev 10/29/25	Robin Beth Schaer	Resident	Opponent	
28	House Dev 10/29/25	John Howell	Resident	Opponent	
29	House Dev 10/29/25	Bonnie Edwards	Resident	Opponent	
30	House Dev 10/29/25	Wendy Patton	Resident	Opponent	
31	House Dev 10/29/25	Danielle V Minson	Jewish Federation of Cincinnati	Proponent	
32	House Dev 10/29/25	Betty Sterling	Resident	Opponent	
33	House Dev 10/29/25	Solomon Freilich	Resident	Opponent	
34	House Dev 10/29/25	Anne Yager	Resident	Opponent	
35	House Dev 10/29/25	Stephanie Riccobene	Resident	Opponent	
36	House Dev 10/29/25	Noura Dabdoub	Resident	Opponent	
37	House Dev 10/29/25	Abdallah Rahmy	Resident	Opponent	
38	House Dev 10/29/25	Rima Dabdoub	Resident	Opponent	
39	House Dev 10/29/25	Erica Montejo	Resident	Opponent	
40	House Dev 10/29/25	Marya Keeny	Resident	Opponent	
41	House Dev 10/29/25	Laura Beans Sika	Resident	Opponent	
42	House Dev 10/29/25	Susan Righi	Resident	Opponent	
43	House Dev 10/29/25	Diana Sette	Resident	Opponent	
44	House Dev 10/29/25	Stuart Lukz		Opponent	
45	House Dev 10/29/25	Jenelle Vincent		Opponent	
46	House Dev 10/29/25	Terry Lodge	Northwest Ohio Peace Coalition	Opponent	
47	House Dev 10/29/25	Loraine McCosker	Resident	Opponent	
48	House Dev 10/29/25	Jan Nespor	Resident	Opponent	
49	House Dev 10/29/25	Armando Telles		Opponent	No document posted (link returns committee page)
50	Senate Fin 03/03/26	Rep. Thomas Hall	Ohio House	Sponsor	

#	Hearing	Witness	Organization	Position	Note
51	Senate Fin 03/03/26	Rep. Eric Synenberg	Ohio House	Sponsor	
52	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Rick Carfagna	Ohio Chamber of Commerce	Proponent	
53	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Ori Katzav	JewishColumbus	Proponent	
54	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Aaron Abel	Jewish Federation of Cleveland	Proponent	
55	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Daniel Pearlman	Jewish Federation of Cleveland	Proponent	
56	Senate Fin 05/12/26	John Buck	Negev Foundation	Proponent	
57	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Emily Kichler		Opponent	
58	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Mo Dayem		Opponent	
59	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Jawhara Qutiefan	Amp Columbus	Opponent	Document begins "My name is Jay Qutiefan"
60	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Patricia Marida		Opponent	
61	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Asif Qazi, MD		Opponent	
62	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Andrea Kleinhenz	Cleveland Peace Action	Opponent	
63	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Don Bryant	Cleveland Peace Action	Opponent	
64	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Samantha Baker	Columbus CPUSA	Opponent	
65	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Marya Keeny	Ohio Divest	Opponent	
66	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Charles Abernathy	Self	Opponent	
67	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Sezny Watkins		Opponent	
68	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Susanna Whitman	Resident	Opponent	
69	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Max Brickman	Heartland Ventures	Proponent	
70	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Jason Wuliger	Jewish Federations of North America	Proponent	
71	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Roy Büchler	Jewish Federation of Greater Toledo	Proponent	
72	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Peter Silverman		Proponent	
73	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Stephen Rothschild	Jewish Federation and Foundation of Greater Toledo	Proponent	
74	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Craig M Rochkind	Self	Proponent	
75	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Boris Zilberman	CUFI Action Fund	Proponent	
76	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Mary Bilyeu		Proponent	
77	Senate Fin 05/12/26	David Cordonnier	Dayton Development Coalition	Proponent	
78	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Justin Kirschner	American Jewish Committee	Proponent	
79	Senate Fin 05/12/26	David R Berland		Proponent	
80	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Howard Rosenberg	self	Proponent	
81	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Howie Beigelman	Ohio Jewish Communities	Proponent	
82	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Barbara Ewing	Youngstown Business Incubator*	Proponent	Listed as name "Barbara," organization "Ewing"
83	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Willa Bluestone	Ohio Life Sciences Association	Proponent	
84	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Julie Paris	StandWithUs	Proponent	

#	Hearing	Witness	Organization	Position	Note
85	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Chris Ronayne	Cuyahoga County	Proponent	
86	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Christin Boozer		Opponent	
87	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Samantha Demers		Opponent	
88	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Maria Kalpakidis		Opponent	
89	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Zachariah Shutt		Opponent	
90	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Joseph Reardon	Self	Opponent	
91	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Kenneth McNulty		Opponent	
92	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Sean Abbott-Klafter		Opponent	
93	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Shivani Ramamurthy		Opponent	
94	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Janos Jalics	Cleveland DSA	Opponent	
95	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Dominic Mazzone		Opponent	
96	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Kelly Svoboda		Opponent	
97	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Catherine Weygandt		Opponent	
98	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Lee Weygandt		Opponent	
99	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Adina Winczewski	Ohio Resident	Opponent	
100	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Faten Odeh	CAIR Ohio	Opponent	
101	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Kat Finneran		Opponent	
102	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Eric LeMay		Opponent	
103	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Josiah Moye		Opponent	
104	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Jan Nespor		Opponent	
105	Senate Fin 05/12/26	J. Kay Coughlin		Opponent	
106	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Mica Kleban		Opponent	
107	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Jamal Pracha		Opponent	
108	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Terry Lodge	Northwest Ohio Peace Coalition	Opponent	
109	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Laura Johnson	Self	Opponent	
110	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Stuart Lukz	(listed as “xxx-xx-xxxx”)	Opponent	
111	Senate Fin 05/12/26	Shlomo Kai	(ADOR Ltd. capabilities sheet)	Interested Party	