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# Ohio Bill Protecting LGBTQ Rights Receives Widespread Support At Committee Hearing

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**Douglas M. Oldham**
Of Counsel

In October we detailed a new bill in the Ohio legislature aimed at banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing and public accommodations. As an update, House Bill 160, dubbed the Ohio Fairness Act, is currently before Ohio's House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. On January 31, 2018, the committee held a public hearing and provided an opportunity for proponent testimony. It was the first time in nine years that a bill protecting LGBTQ individuals was given proponent testimony in an Ohio House of Representatives committee and the first time in Ohio history that such a bill has received a second hearing in the state legislature. The bill was supported by 96 individuals who attended to testify. This testimony was supplemented by more than 150 written testimonials submitted to the committee. The bill received support from equal rights groups such as Equality Ohio, as well as the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Ohio Business Competes, Columbus Chamber, Columbus Partnership, Greater Cleveland Partnership, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber and other pro-business groups that support diverse workforces for the future of Ohio's business competitiveness. With the bill's progress in the House of Representatives and the support of the business community, House Bill 160 has already come closer than any previous effort to protect the rights of LGBTQ Ohioans. We will keep you updated on the status of this bill as it progresses.

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Ohio Fairness Act
Ohio House of Representatives
Sexual Orientation