



DAYTON

Dayton Area
Chamber of Commerce

1 Chamber Plaza
Fifth and Main Streets
Dayton, Ohio 45402-2400
www.daytonchamber.org

April 13, 2015

Representative Dorothy Pelanda
77 S. High St
14th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Representative Stephanie Kunze
77 S. High St
11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representatives Pelanda & Kunze:

As the regional business advocate in the greater Dayton region, the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce represents over 2,700 businesses and organizations in southwestern Ohio throughout a nine county region. On behalf of these members, the Chamber would like to inform you of our support for House Bill 103, establishing a Women's Week for Policy & Entrepreneurship.

In accordance with the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce's 2015-2016 Legislative & Regulatory Agenda, our members have voiced their strong support for state and federal resource assistance opportunities for minority and women business owners. Recently the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce launched a program geared towards promoting opportunities for women in top leadership positions at companies and organizations across the region. We believe that connecting female leaders, executives and entrepreneurs to development opportunities, creating space to share best practices and providing access to capital and resources is vital to the continued growth of female executives and women-owned businesses in Ohio. House Bill 103 underscores the importance of this mission, and the establishment of a Women's Week for Policy and Entrepreneurship, which will create an ongoing opportunity to highlight the important work being done by female entrepreneurs throughout Ohio.

The economic impact that women entrepreneurs are making in the United States cannot be overlooked. An estimated 9.1 million women-owned businesses contribute more than \$1.4 trillion in revenues to the U.S. economy. Women-owned businesses with a revenue of ten million or higher grew 57% from 2002-2012, and more than 7.9 million people are employed by women-owned businesses nationwide. Yet, according to recent studies, Ohio lags behind much of the country when it comes to strong women-owned business communities. The 2014 State of Women Owned Businesses Report, commissioned by American Express Open, ranked states by growth in number and economic clout of women-owned firms between 1997-2014. Ohio ranked 46 in growth of number of firms, 40 in growth of revenues of women-owned businesses and 42 in growth in employment. Overall in terms of economic clout, Ohio ranks 48 as it relates to women-owned businesses. As a state, we can do better.

We commend you for sponsoring HB 103, and for the much needed focus on growing and supporting women entrepreneurs in Ohio. On behalf of the Dayton area business community, we look forward to working with you and our regional delegation to ensure that this legislation is adopted.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (937) 226-8277.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Precht
Director, Public Policy and Economic Development
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce