



PRESS RELEASE
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Policy Matters urges rejection of deregulation bill

Policy Matters Ohio told a Senate committee today that it should reject a bill that calls for slashing by 30 percent the rules that implement Ohio state law, calling it “impractical and unwarranted.”

The bill, Senate Bill 293, would have agencies examine the rules that make up the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) and develop an inventory of “regulatory restrictions” that require or prohibit an action. Under the bill, “Examples of words suggesting that a rule incorporates a regulatory restriction include ‘shall,’ ‘must,’ ‘require,’ ‘shall not,’ ‘may not’ and ‘prohibit.’” With certain exceptions, state agencies would have to reduce the total number of such “regulatory restrictions” by 30 percent by the end of 2022.

Zach Schiller, Policy Matters research director, told the Senate Transportation, Commerce & Workforce Committee, “a blanket idea that the words ‘shall’ or ‘prohibit’ are somehow bad words; that requiring businesses and residents alike to follow certain rules is bad for business – these are outlandish notions that have no place in legislation.” If legislators want to reduce the number of rules, they should repeal the laws those rules reflect, he said.

Schiller pointed out that the General Assembly regularly approves legislation directing agencies to write new rules, including numerous examples in last year’s budget bill. He noted that the OAC contains regulations ensuring we have clean water to drink, air that is fit to breathe, safe and orderly streets, sanitary restaurants and public swimming pools, and protections for taxpayer funds, among others.

“Regulations are necessary to a civil society and a stable economy,” he concluded. “As this testimony has outlined, they are the product of the General Assembly’s every day work.”

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Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.