

Sunset Review Committee

June 25, 2024

Chair Wilkin and members of the commission, thank you for the opportunity to advocate for the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board.

The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board (CSRAB) was created in 1988 to renovate, operate, maintain and preserve the historic character of the capitol square. The operation of the complex is controlled by the 12 members of the CSRAB consisting of four members representing the Ohio House of Representatives, four members representing the Ohio Senate, the Governor's Chief of Staff and three members appointed by the Governor. This governance is unique to Ohio, with no other state capitol governed by a Board. I contend that it is this structure which has allowed us to maintain the capitol such that 28 years after the renovation, it looks practically the same.

Our most important mission is to maintain and preserve the historic integrity of the Statehouse. This includes an intense maintenance and custodial responsibility. In 2017, we conducted a facility assessment of the Statehouse along with a Structural Condition Survey Report of the Parking Garage. As a result, the Board was able to take a comprehensive assessment of the condition of the building and adequately devise a long-term plan for repairs and general maintenance of the building and garage. More than \$45 million in projects were identified to be addressed within 20 years with \$31.1 million of those falling in the 0-5-year range. We were able to complete many of these projects with our GRF budget along with generous capital funding provided by the legislature. We will continue to complete as many of these projects as we can with our current funding. Because of a very talented staff, we have been able to do many of the projects in-house.

The report on the structural condition of the parking garage became more critical in 2019 as the condition of the waterproofing membrane continued to fail, resulting in the increase in the deterioration of the concrete floors at a rate quicker than anticipated. The General

Assembly appropriated \$20 million for this project in December 2019 and I'm happy to report that work on the garage is completed and is structurally sound for hopefully the next 60 years.

More recently, we have embarked on several capital projects to modernize the Statehouse. The restoration which occurred in the 1990's is now almost 30 years old. Like with any building, the components have a "shelf life." CSRAB is currently replacing the HVAC system, the electrical and fire suppression systems, replacing the audio systems in the Chambers and committee rooms, replacing the windows with ballistic glass, and new elevators throughout the building.

In addition to maintaining and operating the Capitol Square Complex (CSC), CSRAB is charged with educating visitors about the history of Ohio, including its political, economic, and social development and the design and construction of the capitol building and its grounds.

Our diverse partnerships have provided the ability to continue free, family-friendly programming such as the annual holiday festival, Civil War encampment on the Statehouse lawn, performing arts presentations, and countless educational programs. Each year we commemorate the repose of President Abraham Lincoln in the Rotunda, and we host a Civil War Living History Day with Battery A, a reenactment group commissioned by CSRAB. The firing of the Statehouse cannons is a highlight of this event, bringing in school groups and history enthusiasts to the Statehouse.

One important partnership that we maintain is with the Capitol Square Foundation. Currently the Foundation assists with the funding of our educational programs through public donations. CSRAB continues to work with the Capitol Square Foundation to achieve the goal of having every school-aged child in Ohio visit the Statehouse before graduation. To this end, transportation grants are offered through the Foundation to school districts, to offset the costs of field trips to the Statehouse. Together, we set out to enrich the

experience for schoolchildren, teachers and visitors by investing in the Ohio Statehouse Museum.

The Ohio Statehouse Museum's mission is to inspire the next generation of public servants who will lead our great state. The museum includes hands-on, interactive activities in an open environment, and is an integral part of our educational programming providing for countless opportunities to collaborate with K-12 schools. The most recent collaboration with the Capitol Square Foundation and the Ohio History Connection was an upgrade to the museum, enabling the original 1802 and 1851 Ohio constitutions to be on permanent public display at the Ohio Statehouse. Working together, this public-private partnership has produced an exhibit that is the first of its kind in the United States. And in January, thanks to the efforts of the Foundation, we unveiled the first, and likely last, new painting to be commissioned for the Statehouse with the addition of "Ohioans in Space" – a 9x12 feet painting depicting four Ohio astronauts and a flight engineer who explored space and put Ohio on the map. Next on their to-do list is raising funds for a memorial depicting the women's suffrage movement in Ohio.

We are able to accomplish all of this with a staff of 63 employees, a number reduced from a high of over 100. Borrowing a phrase from a former Governor, we are "working harder and smarter and doing more with less."

Again, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.