



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 0366X-2018, **Version:** 1

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**BACKGROUND:** Chapter 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code allows property owners to petition the municipal corporation within which their property is located to include the property in an energy special improvement district, the purpose of which is to provide “special energy improvement projects,” as defined in Section 1710.01 of the Ohio Revised Code. Section 1710.02(F) of the Ohio Revised Code also allows such property owners to submit an initial plan of services for approval with the petition. Upon receipt of a petition and an initial plan submitted by the owners 100% of the properties requesting to be included in the energy special improvement district, the municipal corporation may approve the petition, cause the addition of the property to the energy special improvement district, and proceed to levy special assessments to pay the costs of the special energy improvement projects to be completed pursuant to the petition and the initial plan.

On November 23, 2015, the Council passed Resolution No. 0261X-2015, which approved a petition, program plan, and the articles of incorporation for the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District (the “District”), and created the District.

Section 1710.06 of the Ohio Revised Code allows the District to cooperate with additional owners of real property within a municipal corporation which has created an energy special improvement district to submit to the municipal corporation petitions and supplemental plans, which supplement the program plan. Upon its receipt of a petition and supplemental plan signed by the owners of 100% of the properties requesting to be added to the energy special improvement district, the municipal corporation may approve the petition and supplemental plan and proceed to levy special assessments to pay the costs of the special energy improvement projects to be completed pursuant to the petition and the supplemental plan.

Easton Innkeepers, LLC, as the owner of a certain parcel of real property within the City of Columbus (located at the northwest corner of Morse and Sunbury Roads), has submitted a petition and supplemental plan to the Council, requesting that the Council approve the petition and supplemental plan, cause the addition of such parcel of real property to the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District, and levy special assessments on such property to pay the costs of the special energy improvement projects to be provided on its property.

Easton Innkeepers, LLC is working in cooperation with PACE Equity, LLC or one or more of its affiliates to obtain financing secured by the special assessments requested in the petition and supplemental plan, the proceeds of which financing will be used to pay the costs of the special energy improvement projects described in the petition and supplemental plan.

This legislation is to approve the petition, the supplemental plan, and the addition of property to the district and to declare the necessity of levying special assessments to pay the costs of “special energy improvement projects” set forth in the supplemental plans, all pursuant to Chapters 727 and 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Emergency action is requested on this legislation to allow the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District to be expanded, the special assessments to be levied in a timely manner in order to facilitate financing for the project by PACE Equity, LLC or one or more of its affiliates, the special assessment process to proceed in a timely manner, and allow financing for the special energy improvement projects to be obtained by the District.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** No funding is required for this legislation.

To approve a petition and supplemental plan for the addition of certain real property located at the northwest corner of Morse and Sunbury Roads to the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District under Chapter 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code; to authorize the special energy improvement projects to be constructed upon such real property; to

declare the necessity of acquiring, constructing, and improving certain public improvements in the City in cooperation with the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District; and to declare an emergency.

**WHEREAS**, as set forth in Chapter 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Ohio General Assembly has authorized property owners to include their properties within energy special improvement districts (each, an “ESID”) upon a petition to a municipal corporation or township, which ESIDs are voluntary organizations of property owners who undertake special energy improvement projects for their properties and finance such special energy improvement projects by way of voluntary special assessments; and

**WHEREAS**, Easton Innkeepers, LLC (the “Owner”), as the owner of certain real property located within the City of Columbus, Ohio (the “City”), has identified the property located at the northwest corner of Morse and Sunbury Roads (the “Property”), as an appropriate property for a special energy improvement project; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bexley, Columbus, Dublin, Grove City, Hilliard, Perry Township, Whitehall, Worthington Regional Energy Special Improvement District (the “District”) was created under Chapters 1702 and 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code as an ESID and established pursuant to Resolution No. 0261X-2015 of the Council (the “Council”) of the City approved on November 23, 2015 (the “Creation Resolution”); and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Creation Resolution, the Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District Program Plan (as amended and supplemented from time to time, the “Plan”) was adopted as a plan for public improvements and public services under Ohio Revised Code Section 1710.02(F), which plan allows for additional properties within the City and within any municipal corporation or township which is adjacent to any other municipal corporation or township in which a portion of the District’s territory is located to be added to the territory of the District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Owner has determined to submit to the Mayor and the Council, a *Petition for Special Assessments for Special Energy Improvement Projects and Affidavit* (the “Petition”), together with a *Columbus Regional Energy Special Improvement District Program Plan - Supplement to Plan for Morse and Sunbury Roads, Columbus, Ohio Project* (the “Supplemental Plan”), all in accordance with Section 1710.02 of the Ohio Revised Code, each of which are now on file with the Director of the Department of Development (the “Development Director”) or the Development Director’s designee; and

**WHEREAS**, the Petition and Supplemental Plan request that the Property be added to the District and that the City levy special assessments on the Property to pay the costs of a special energy improvement project to be provided on the Property, all as described more particularly in the Petition and the Supplemental Plan (the “Project”); and

**WHEREAS**, said Petition and Supplemental Plan are for the purpose of developing and implementing special energy improvement projects in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 2o of Article VIII of the Ohio Constitution, including, without limitation, the special energy improvement project to be located at the Property; and

**WHEREAS**, the Supplemental Plan defines the Project to be completed at the Property and identifies the amount and length of special assessments for the Project, and such special assessments shall require formal authorization from this Council pursuant to Chapters 727 and 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 1710.02(F) of the Ohio Revised Code provides that a political subdivision which has approved a petition for special assessments for public improvements in an energy special improvement district and an initial plan pursuant to Section 1710.02(F) of the Ohio Revised Code shall levy the requested special assessments pursuant to Chapter 727 of the Ohio Revised Code; and

**WHEREAS**, in the Petition, the Owner requests that the Project be paid for by special assessments assessed upon the Property (the “Special Assessments”) in an amount sufficient to pay the costs of the Project, which is estimated to be \$22,438,383.00, including the related costs of financing the Project, which include, without limitation, the costs identified in Section 4 and other interest, financing, credit enhancement, and issuance expenses and ongoing trustee fees and

District administrative fees and expenses, and requests that the Project be undertaken cooperatively by the City, the District, and such other parties as the City may deem necessary or appropriate; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council, as mandated by Section 1710.02 of the Ohio Revised Code, must approve or disapprove the Petition and the Supplemental Plan within 60 days of the submission of the Petition and the Supplemental Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council has determined to approve the Petition and the Supplemental Plan and thereby add the Property to the territory of the District; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council, pursuant to Section 1710.02(G)(4) of the Ohio Revised Code, has determined that the Project to be constructed and implemented on the Property is not required to be owned exclusively by the City for its purposes, for uses determined by this Council, as the legislative authority of the City as those that will promote the welfare of the people of the City; to improve the quality of life and the general and economic well-being of the people of City; to better ensure the public health, safety, and welfare; to protect water and other natural resources; to provide for the conservation and preservation of natural and open areas and farmlands, including by making urban areas more desirable or suitable for development and revitalization; to control, prevent, minimize, clean up, or mediate certain contamination of or pollution from lands in the state and water contamination or pollution; or to provide for safe and natural areas and resources; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Department of Development in that it is necessary that this Resolution take effect at the earliest possible date in order to allow the Owner to begin work on the special energy improvement projects on the Property, and the District to take advantage of financing available to it for a limited time and for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health and safety; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**Section 1.** Each capitalized term not otherwise defined in this Resolution or by reference to another document shall have the meaning assigned to it in the Petition.

**Section 2.** This Council approves the Petition and the Supplemental Plan, each in substantially the forms now on file with the Development Director or the Development Director's designee.

**Section 3.** Pursuant to Section 1710.02(G)(4) of the Ohio Revised Code, this Council determines that the Project to be constructed and implemented on the Property is not required to be owned exclusively by the City for its purposes, for uses determined by this Council, as the legislative authority of the City, as those that will promote the welfare of the people of such participating political subdivision; to improve the quality of life and the general and economic well-being of the people of the City; to better ensure the public health, safety, and welfare; to protect water and other natural resources; to provide for the conservation and preservation of natural and open areas and farmlands, including by making urban areas more desirable or suitable for development and revitalization; to control, prevent, minimize, clean up, or mediate certain contamination of or pollution from lands in the state and water contamination or pollution; or to provide for safe and natural areas and resources. This Council accordingly authorizes the board of directors of the District to act as its agent to sell, transfer, lease, or convey the Project to be constructed and implemented on the Property. The consideration the board of directors of the District must obtain from any sale, transfer, lease, or conveyance of the Project on the Property is any consideration greater than or equal to \$1.00.

**Section 4.** This Council declares necessary, and a vital and essential public purpose of the City, to improve the Property, which is located at the northwest corner of Morse and Sunbury Roads, by providing for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of the Project by Easton Innkeepers, LLC, as set forth in the Petition and the Plan, and providing for the payment of the costs of the Project, including any and all architectural, engineering, legal, insurance, consulting, energy auditing, planning, acquisition, installation, construction, surveying, testing, and inspection costs; the amount of any damages resulting from the Projects and the interest on such damages; the costs incurred in connection with the preparation, levy and collection of the special assessments; the cost of purchasing and otherwise acquiring any real estate or interests in real estate; expenses of legal services; costs of labor and material; and other financing costs

incurred in connection with the issuance, sale, and servicing of securities, nonprofit corporate obligations, or other obligations issued to provide a loan to Easton Innkeepers, LLC, or otherwise to pay costs of the Project in anticipation of the receipt of the Special Assessments, capitalized interest on, and financing reserve funds for, such securities, nonprofit corporate obligations, or other obligations so issued, including any credit enhancement fees, trustee fees, and District administrative fees and expenses; together with all other necessary expenditures, all as more fully described in the Petitions, the Supplemental Plans, and the plans, profiles, specifications, and estimates of cost of the Projects, all of which are on file with the Development Director or the Development Director's designee and open to the inspection of all persons interested.

**Section 5.** This Council determines that the Project's elements are so situated in relation to each other that in order to complete the acquisition and improvement of the Project's elements in the most practical and economical manner, they should be acquired and improved at the same time, with the same kind of materials, and in the same manner; and that the Project's elements shall be treated as a single improvement, pursuant to Section 727.09 of the Ohio Revised Code, and the Project's elements shall be treated as a joint improvement to be undertaken cooperatively by the City and the District pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 9.482 and Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1710.

**Section 6.** The plans and specifications and total costs of the Project now on file in the office of the Development Director or the Development Director's designee are approved, subject to changes as permitted by Ohio Revised Code Chapter 727. The Project shall be made in accordance with the plans, specifications, profiles, and estimates for the Project.

**Section 7.** This Council determines and declares that the Project is an essential and vital public, governmental purposes of the City as Special Energy Improvement Projects, as defined in Ohio Revised Code Section 1710.01(I); and that in order to fulfill that essential and vital public purpose of the City, it is necessary and proper to provide, in cooperation with the District, for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of the Project in the manner contemplated by the Petition and the Supplemental Plan. This Council determines and declares that the Project is conducive to the public peace, health, safety and welfare of the City and the inhabitants of the City.

**Section 8.** Pursuant to and subject to the provisions of a valid Petition signed by the owner of 100% of the Property, the entire cost of the Project shall be paid by the Special Assessments levied against the Property, which is the benefited property. The provisions of the Petition are ratified, adopted, approved and incorporated into this Resolution as if set forth in full in this Resolution. The portion of the costs of the Project allocable to the City will be 0%. The City does not intend to issue securities in anticipation of the levy of the Special Assessments.

**Section 9.** The method of levying the Special Assessments shall be in proportion to the benefits received, allocated among the parcels constituting the Property as set forth in the Petition and the Supplemental Plan.

**Section 10.** The lots or parcels of land to be assessed for the Project shall be the Property, described in Exhibit A to the Petition, all of which lots and lands are determined to be specially benefited by the Project.

**Section 11.** The Special Assessments shall be levied and paid in 50 semi-annual installments pursuant to the list of estimated Special Assessments set forth in the Petition, and the owner of the Property has waived its option to pay the Special Assessment in cash within 30 days after the first publication of the notice of the assessing ordinance.

The aggregate amount of Special Assessments estimated to be necessary to pay the costs of the Project is \$22,438,383.00. Each semi-annual Special Assessment payment represents payment of a portion of the principal of and interest on obligations issued or incurred to pay the costs of the Project and of administrative expenses. The interest portion of the Special Assessments, together with amounts used to pay administrative expenses, are determined to be substantially equivalent to the fair market rate or rates of interest that would have been borne by securities issued in anticipation of the collection of the Special Assessments if such securities had been issued by the City or another issuer of notes or bonds to pay the costs of the Project. In addition to the Special Assessments, the Auditor of Franklin County, Ohio may impose a special assessment collection fee with respect to each semi-annual payment, which amount will be added to the Special

Assessments by the Auditor of Franklin County, Ohio.

**Section 12.** The Development Director or the Development Director's designee is authorized and directed to prepare and file in the office of the City Clerk the estimated Special Assessments for the cost of the Project in accordance with the method of assessment set forth in the Petition, the Supplemental Plan, and this Resolution, showing the amount of the assessment against each lot or parcel of land to be assessed.

**Section 13.** The Owner has, in the Petition, waived the requirement for the City to, upon the filing of the estimated Special Assessments with the City Clerk, serve notice of the adoption of this Resolution and the filing of the estimated Special Assessments upon the Owner, as the owners of the Property, as provided in Section 727.13 Ohio Revised Code. To the extent the Owner has not waived the applicable procedural requirements of Chapter 727 of the Ohio Revised Code, the appropriate officials of the City shall also comply with the applicable procedural requirements of Chapter 727 of the Ohio Revised Code.

**Section 14.** The Development Director or the Development Director's designee is authorized, pursuant to Section 727.12 of the Ohio Revised Code, to cause the Special Assessments to be levied and collected at the earliest possible time including, if applicable, prior to the completion of the acquisition and construction of the Projects.

**Section 15.** The Special Assessments will be used by the City to provide the Projects in cooperation with the District in any manner, including assigning the Special Assessments actually received by the City to the District or to another party the City deems appropriate, and the Special Assessments are appropriated for such purposes.

**Section 16.** This Council accepts and approves the waiver of all further notices, hearings, claims for damages, rights to appeal and other rights of property owners under the law, including but not limited to those specified in the Ohio Constitution, Chapter 727 of the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 1710 of the Ohio Revised Code, and the Charter of the City of Columbus, Ohio, and consents to the immediate imposition of the Special Assessments upon the Property. This waiver encompasses, but is not limited to, waivers by the Owner of the following rights:

- (i) The right to notice of the adoption of the Resolution of Necessity under Sections 727.13 and 727.14 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (ii) The right to limit the amount of the Special Assessments under Sections 727.03 and 727.06 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (iii) The right to file an objection to the Special Assessments under Section 727.15 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (iv) The right to the establishment of, and any proceedings by and any notice from an Assessment Equalization Board under Sections 727.16 and 727.17 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (v) The right to file any claim for damages under Sections 727.18 through 727.22 of the Ohio Revised Code and Section 727.43 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (vi) The right to notice that bids or quotations for the Project may exceed estimates by 15%;
- (vii) The right to seek a deferral of payments of Special Assessments under Section 727.251 of the Ohio Revised Code;
- (viii) The right to notice of the passage of the assessing ordinance under Section 727.26 of the Ohio Revised Code; and
- (ix) Any and all procedural defects, errors, or omissions in the Special Assessment process.

**Section 17.** The City is authorized to enter into agreements by and among the City, the District, the Owner, PACE Equity, LLC or one or more of its affiliates, the County Treasurer of Franklin County, Ohio, and such other parties as the City may deem necessary or appropriate in order to provide the Projects, and that the Mayor, the Development Director, or either of them, or either of their designees, is authorized to execute, on the City's behalf, such agreements.

**Section 18.** That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this Resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its adoption and approval by the Mayor or ten days after adoption if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.