

**Mayor Rhine McLin's Testimony**  
**Sen. Sherrod Brown Hearing**  
**Wednesday, October 8, 2008**

Thank you for inviting me to speak this afternoon on behalf of the City of Dayton. I especially want to thank Senator Brown for organizing today's event and giving us the opportunity to express our concerns and suggestions for stimulating economic growth throughout the Dayton region.

Certainly the events that have transpired at the national level over the past few weeks regarding the Wall Street crisis only deepen the concern and anxiety we feel locally about our economic future.

There is no more pressing issue in Dayton and the region today than the retention and creation of good jobs for our citizens and for our future. Our viability and quality of life as a city and region depend on it.

Certainly we can point to recent economic development successes that are encouraging for the Dayton area. In the city we are witnessing investments by CareSource and our other major health care institutions. The University of Dayton is a partner in the redevelopment of prime land around its campus. The BRAC process occurring through Wright Patterson Air Force Base will create new, high-paying jobs for the region. And the development of Tech Town and related high-tech companies is helping with our transition from a heavy manufacturing economy to one based on new and emerging technologies.

However, this transition, like any change, comes with a significant level of pain and difficulty. Dayton and the region have experienced the loss of retail businesses, manufacturing jobs, and corporate offices that often accompany such transformations.

We understand that our economic challenges will not disappear overnight. There is much work to be done to retain and attract high-quality jobs, and to educate our youth and retrain the workforce for tomorrow's careers.

As Mayor of a city that is facing the challenges first-hand, I have talked to more people than I care to admit who have been affected by the various job closures that have hit Dayton and the surrounding region in the past few years. Laid-off workers from such traditional community anchors as General Motors, Delphi, and their related suppliers tell the same story of frustration and fear.

Many Dayton residents are even being affected by the DHL announcement to downsize its operation in Wilmington, Ohio. We have many residents who take buses to Wilmington each day to work the busy night shift. These workers also express the same frustration and fear --

frustration that they dedicated their careers to helping these companies succeed, and fear that their current skill sets will not be adequate to fill future jobs in the changing economy.

So what can be done to support these men and women who have been or soon will be hit by the economic challenges today?

First, we recommend that unemployment insurance extensions continue in order to assist workers and their families as we enter another winter season. Although admittedly a short term fix, this action would do much to help people who are already hurting.

We also believe that as a large urban city, Dayton has needs uniquely different than newer, suburban communities. Older infrastructure, brownfield remnants and a population with more social service needs combine to create higher hurdles for urban cities to overcome.

At one time, mature cities had the Urban Enterprise Zone program to help level the playing field, but now those benefits and business incentives are available in almost any community. Big cities need special tools and resources to help us deal with the extra challenges we face.

We believe that additional National Emergency Grant (NEG) monies, like those recently sought by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services from the U.S. Department of Labor, would provide valuable aid. These funds would be used to help expand the capacity to offer more job and skill training programs for displaced workers, especially those from General Motors and DHL.

In addition, federal resources to invest in local infrastructure would help Dayton expedite efforts to clean-up old brownfield sites and open the way for new business development and subsequent job creation. We have benefited from such financial assistance in the past, but the pace of the funding process can be as frustrating as it is complex.

While we understand that money and resources are tight at every level, without the legislative and financial support of the federal government, communities across the country will continue to suffer, or experience delayed revitalization success.

Given the current condition of the economy, the sooner that communities can begin to create and grow jobs at the local level, the sooner we can see a rebound on a broader national scale.

Thank you again for the opportunity to express our concerns. We look forward to continued dialogue on how we can all work together to protect workers and their families, and repair and revitalize our local job market.

Thank you.