

I am writing to make known my support for Ohio HB 175 to permit small livestock, and my reasoning therefore. I believe these reasons could be applied likewise to support this Bill on secular grounds. My city (Hamilton) prohibits any form of small livestock, yet I violate that ordinance by keeping a very small flock of chickens as I do so for religious reasons (I am an adherent of "Ancestral Ways" a cousin to the "Asatru" religion). I base my actions on the protection I believe would flow from the Religious Land Use Act (42 USC 2000cc).

Under that law, the city cannot infringe upon my religious practice unless (1) they have a "**compelling governmental interest**" in doing so, and (2) any infringement must be by the "**least restrictive means necessary**". As other cities, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, and more allow chickens, I believe my city would have a difficult time in establishing that they have a "compelling governmental interest" in prohibiting me from same. Likewise, even if the city established a "compelling governmental interest" in prohibiting chickens in general, I believe there to be "less restrictive means" by which to meet these interest. For example, health and sanitary laws could come into play if my chickens were not cared for correctly, as could noise ordinances if I kept a rooster that crows. Thus, the city would have no justification to ban the chickens, but they could step in if they were loud or unsanitary. In short, my chickens should be permitted unless I failed to care for them.

I believe this reasoning could be applied to anyone keeping small livestock for personal reasons as well. In addition, maintaining small livestock is a great way to educate children as to food resources and responsibility. It is a great way to take control, at least in a small way, of ones nutritional intake by controlling where your meat and eggs come from and how they were raised and what they were fed. It can also be, as was in our case, very therapeutic, as it was for my elderly mother with Alzheimer's Disease as caring for our birds gave her a sense of purpose and took her back to memories of her childhood.

This country was once founded upon an agricultural base and almost every home had at least chickens in the not so distant past. During war time it was even considered a patriotic duty to keep and raise chickens to provide food for oneself. (see attached). A small milk goat would go far in these respects as well (I would love a small milk goat and if this Bill passes my property is just large enough to permit one). I support HB 175 and feel it should be adopted into law in this great state of ours. Such a law would also protect local municipalities from facing civil litigation where they unknowingly violate federal law by banning chickens from those who keep them for religious reasons as I do. Religious Land Use Act (42 USC 2000cc).

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns and support for HB 175.

Alfar Kynwulf
Hamilton, Ohio

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Two Hens in the Back Yard for Each Person in the House Will Keep a Family In Fresh Eggs

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An interested child, old enough to take a little responsibility, can care for a few fowls as well as a grown person.

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