

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 1/23/18

Name: Sean Joyce

Are you representing: Yourself _____ Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens

Position/Title: Interim President & Executive Director

Address: 714 North Portage Path

City: Akron State: Ohio Zip: 44303 - 1399

Best Contact Telephone: 330-836-5533 Email: sjoyce@stanhywet.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes _____ No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 388

Specific Issue: Stan Hywet license plate

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent _____ Interested Party _____

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No _____

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 7 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

I am supportive of a license plate for Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

A Magnificent Historic House Museum and Country Estate



January 24, 2018

Re: House Bill 388 Testimony

714 North Porage Path
Akron, Ohio 44303-1399
330-836-5533
fax: 330-836-2680
www.stanhywet.org

Chairman Green, Vice Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the Transportation and Public Safety Committee: thank you for hearing my testimony regarding House Bill 388.

My name is Sean Joyce and I am the Interim President and Executive Director of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens located in Akron, Ohio. I am pleased to provide some insights to what makes Stan Hywet such a special place and treasure to so many here in Ohio and nationally. Those connected to Stan Hywet are excited about the opportunity for Stan Hywet to have a license plate.

Built between 1912 and 1915, Stan Hywet, former home of F.A. Seiberling (co-founder of The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, still the only rubber company headquartered in Akron), is an Ohio icon and one of the nation's finest country estate museums and leader in historic restoration and preservation. Stan Hywet features the sole surviving Warren Manning landscape in its original form; the only fully restored Ellen Biddle Shipman English garden that is open to the public; and, due to the generosity of the Seiberling heirs, a Manor House with its original contents largely intact. Stan Hywet is a recipient of the Trustee Emeritus Award for Excellence in the Stewardship of Historic Sites from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the fourth recipient of the award after George Washington's Mount Vernon, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, and Washington, D.C.'s Octagon House. The estate is an accredited museum since 2000 and has achieved national consumer recognition as the #1 Historic Home Tour by readers of USA Today (2016).

Stan Hywet is an essential contributor to Summit County's economic well-being as a prime tourist destination attracting numerous groups and individual consumers to the area each season. Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens welcomes over 130,000 visitors each year, up from 85,000 in 2010. This growth includes the addition of approximately 30,000 youth. Stan Hywet serves the people of Akron, but its reach also extends throughout Ohio and beyond. It hosts over 150 rental events (up 75% from 2010) mostly comprised of wedding ceremonies and receptions bringing guests from all over the region and the country. The organization is also a prominent educational resource for children and adults, with more than 10,000 K-12 students per year participating in educational programming on the property. A lifeblood of the estate continues to be our strong membership base and the over 550 committed volunteers who contribute more than 60,000 donated hours a year. For generations of Akron residents, volunteers and advocates, Stan Hywet is a source of civic pride and an important contributor to the cultural identity of our region.

Over the past decade, through the generous support of the State of Ohio and other major donors, Stan Hywet has restored the estate's West Terrace, completed an extensive waterproofing project to safeguard the Manor House foundation, renovated the Manor House basement auditorium to serve as an attractive rental space for weddings and special events and as a catalyst for increased revenues from earned income, restored the unique Japanese Garden to its original splendor, restored the Manor House's deteriorating roof and gutter system, restored the beautiful Grape Arbor, restored the lead paneled glass windows across the property, cleared and stabilized the Cliff Face below the Tea Houses, and completed an award-winning restoration of the Perimeter Stone Wall. In addition, restoration of 16 rooms within the Manor House is currently underway.

A dedicated license plate is not only the opportunity for Ohio residents to elevate the momentum of growth in awareness for this historic icon and national treasure but also to demonstrate and enhance their financial support for Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens. As the estate has benefitted significantly through capital investments from the State of Ohio, this provides a natural link that will be celebrated by those who choose this special license plate, many of whom are among a very excited and dedicated group of staff, volunteers and community leaders who have anxiously awaited the announcement of your decision. Thank you once again for this opportunity.

Sean M. Joyce, CPA
Interim President and Executive Director
Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens