

Thank you, Senator Coley and the rest of the Committee, for your time.

My name is Jeni Britton Bauer, I am the Founder of Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams. I am a long-time, very proud Ohioan, and a seasoned supporter of the Columbus Crew. We were one of the first companies to jump on board as a business ally to support the movement to keep the team in this city. There are now over 312 like-minded businesses supporting the effort.

I am here today to stress to you the importance of the Columbus Crew—not just to the social and sports fabric of our city and our state, but to the business community. Columbus is a thriving, successful, and growing city largely due to its youthful and energetic population. A demographic I look to as patrons of my craft and as talented employees. This young population consists of people who grew up with soccer. They played in youth leagues, their friends played in youth leagues, and now, as adults, soccer is their sport of choice.

This population wants to be in a city and state that has great soccer—where it is played at the highest levels and is part of the fabric of society. Keeping the Crew in Columbus is an important factor in continuing to attract and to retain the people that this state needs, that I need, to continue on the path of growth and innovation.

The story we tell to the world is important. Companies are tightly tied to the values, standards and actions of the cities and states in which they live. The Columbus Crew represents a forward-thinking, best in class, visionary leadership aspect of our community, and, frankly, at least on a national level, one that we can't afford to lose. Can you think of another time when Columbus was first to jump into something that became mainstream? When our leaders took the lead? When our city was a first? Something in the national, mainstream spotlight? If you can't, then we cannot afford to lose the Columbus Crew. As a business owner, I am so proud of my city and state, and I use the Crew often to illustrate that point all over America.

Please support this resolution encouraging the team to remain in Columbus, Ohio. Its presence is a vital part of what makes this city and state so attractive to the amazing and innovative population we have, and in attracting new business and people to our incredible city.