

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: _____

Name: _____

Are you representing: Yourself _____ Organization _____

Organization (If Applicable): _____

Position/Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Best Contact Telephone: _____ Email: _____

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

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): _____

Specific Issue: _____

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? _____

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Facilitate the Bill's path toward flexibility and feasibility that has arisen during the coronavirus pandemic, while encouraging horse racing in a safe and efficient manner. The changes include clarity around alternative accommodations for last-minute rescheduling of racing dates and locations in an emergency, as well as clarification and protection of the Ohio Fairs Fund distribution and use of those funds by county agricultural societies, independent agricultural societies, and the Ohio Expositions Commission.

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.



Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association
2237 Sonora Drive
Grove City, Ohio 44123
Ph.: 614-221-3650
Fax 614-221-8726
www.ohha.com

Ohio House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee
The Ohio Statehouse
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Re.: H.B. 665 Amendment 2396-2

June 10, 2020

Chairman Koehler, Vice Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Brent and Members of the Ohio House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee. My names is Renée Mancino, and I am testifying as the Executive Director of the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association (OHHA) on behalf of its over 3,700 Members across Ohio.

Established in 1953, The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association is the only non-profit association serving Ohio's Standardbred horse owners, breeders, trainers, drivers and fans who participate in the sport of harness racing in the Buckeye State. The mission of the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association is to preserve, protect, promote and serve the entire Standardbred industry in Ohio and beyond.

The Association provides direct and substantial fiscal support to all fairs racing or not, by supplementing the live horseracing tax generated Ohio Fairs Fund monies that are distributed. The direct support follows the same codified formula provided-for in RC. 3769.082 and 3769.0811. In addition to providing on-track representatives at each of the four extended pari-mutuel harness racetracks in Ohio, the Association provides oversight over 21 of the Buckeye State's 66 Racing Fairs with the Ohio Fair Racing Conference. The Association provides Regional Coordinators to service individuals and Fair Boards at those 21 racing fairs. In a typical year, the Association also provides a fully staffed and stocked statewide advertising, marketing, and on-site "Racing with the Stars" promotional campaign at 60-66 fair locations, including the Ohio State Fair. Racing with the Stars provides interactive youth and fan-based activities and initiatives that promote agriculture and harness racing.

The OHHA would like to commend Representatives Jones and Wilkin, the members of this Committee, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and the Ohio Fair Managers Association for their work on House Bill 665. The County Fairs are in integral part of the community and harness racing is proud to support the grassroots efforts of the Ohio Fairs.

Amendment AM2396-2 – Ohio Fairs Fund

After review of House Bill 665, the OHHA, in coordination with the Ohio Fair Managers Association, seeks to amend (AM 2396-2) a portion of this legislation dealing with the Ohio Fairs Fund distribution to facilitate the Bill's path toward flexibility and feasibility that has arisen during the coronavirus pandemic, while encouraging horse racing in a safe and efficient manner. The changes include clarity around alternative accommodations for last-minute rescheduling of racing dates and locations in an emergency, as well as clarification and protection of the Ohio Fairs Fund distribution and use of those funds by county agricultural societies, independent agricultural societies, and the Ohio Expositions Commission.

We are grateful for our partnership with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Ohio Fair Managers Association and appreciate their willingness to address this language in HB 665.

The OFMA works tirelessly to provide safe, community-focused fairs and events, and we have enjoyed working with them and the Department of Agriculture over the years to bring these events to communities throughout Ohio. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. The OHHA would greatly appreciate your willingness to include the changes to the Ohio Fairs Fund in HB 665, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Renée Mancino
Executive Director