

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: _____

Name: Perry Vamadal

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Meigs County Economic Development Office

Position/Title: Director

Address: 238 West Main Street

City: Pomeroy State: OH Zip: 45769

Best Contact Telephone: 740 992-3034 Email: director@meigscountyohio.com

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

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 98

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? _____

Written testimony

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Support HB 98

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.

Perry Varnadoe

Director

Meigs County Economic Development Office

HB 98 Proponent Testimony

Economic and Workforce Development Committee

May 1, 2019

Chairman Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobecki, and members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the importance of HB 98 to my county and to the high unemployment counties in rural Ohio.

As the economy has grown across our country our region has not seen the economic prosperity the rest of our nation has enjoyed. Our population is dwindling....the most recent data showing county population growth in Ohio from 2017 to 2018 shows that 13 of the 17 counties along the Ohio River have lost population during that period. According to ODJFS labor market data the APEG region, even with the advent of shale, has 13,600 less people employed in 2018 than there were in 2009.

One of the main reasons is the lack of suitable sites and buildings in our area for business to locate and grow. While we have the available workforce that business desires, we lack the needed industrial parks and available buildings that makes us competitive for industry site searches.

The Rural Industrial Park Program helps communities with the upfront capital to build these needed assets. It is not a giveaway.....communities will take on considerable financial risk in borrowing these funds, selling their sites and buildings, and repaying these loans, but the flexible terms make it a much more viable tool than private financing.

Chairman Zeltwanger, Vice Chair Powell, Ranking Member Sobecki, and members of the Economic and Workforce Development Committee, I urge you to consider supporting HB 98.