



**Proponent Testimony
House Bill 553
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee Hearing**

**Presented by: Ohio Cattlemen's Association
May 19, 2020**

Thank you Chairman Vitale, Vice Chairman Kick, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. This proponent testimony for HB 553 is submitted on behalf of the Ohio Cattlemen's Association by Elizabeth Harsh, Executive Director.

The Ohio Cattlemen's Association (OCA) is a membership organization that represents the business interests and way of life important to farm families that raise cattle. It serves as the voice of the state's beef cattle business including cattle breeders, cow/calf producers and feeders. It is the beef industry's grassroots policy organization. OCA's mission is to maintain profitability and growth of Ohio's beef industry, while providing consumers with safe and wholesome beef.

OCA supports HB 553 and appreciates the leadership of Representative Jones to bring forward this important legislation that ensures measures are in place to mitigate the tremendous economic losses cattle farmers incur from coyote predation. HB 553 includes, among other provisions, language that stipulates: "A person may take and possess a coyote year-round, and the chief of the division of wildlife shall not adopt any rule to the contrary." It also amends 1533.111 (J) "A fur taker permit is not required to hunt or trap coyotes."

Ohio's cattle producers continue to experience significant economic losses resulting from predation by coyotes, black vultures, and other predators. These losses include animal damage resulting in a loss of productivity, but more often resulting in the death, or forced euthanasia of cattle and calves. Maintaining all control measures for coyotes is critically important to reduce farmer losses.

Once again, thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for this opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Ohio Cattlemen's Association. If you have questions or would like additional information please call or email at 614-873-6736 or eharsh@ohiocattle.org.