

June 1st, 2020

Proponent Testimony—Luke Wiers
HB495 Farm Bus Tags

Chair Green, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 495 to align the registration period of farm busses with the length of H2A farm labor stays.

Wiers Farm is a 5th generation commercial vegetable farm located in northcentral Ohio with over 3,000 acres in production. As a grower, packer and shipper of 45 items, Wiers Farm supplies prominent retailers, wholesalers, processors and restaurants. An industry leader in Food Safety and Traceability, Wiers Farm is proud to consistently delivery fresh, high-quality produce to customers across Ohio, the Midwest and the East Coast throughout the year.

Wiers Farm utilizes the H2A program to fill temporary agricultural laborer positions. One of the requirements of the program—which is jointly administered by US Citizenship and Immigration Services and US Department of Labor—mandates that employers provide transportation between living quarters and worksites at no cost. Wiers Farm accomplishes this with Farm Buses, which are converted school buses that are inspected yearly by the State Highway Patrol.

While H2A positions can last 10 months (~310 days), Ohio's Farm Bus tags are only valid for 210 days. In order meet DOL's requirements, we are asking for Farm Bus tags to be valid for 310 days. This will allow for one inspection and registration process to cover the annual temporary visa period.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Luke Wiers