

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE WITNESS INFORMATION FORM BEFORE TESTIFYING

DATE: MARCH 21, 2017

NAME: KEVIN WIEGING

ORGANIZATION: ULTRASOUND SPECIAL EVENTS INC.
(IF APPLICABLE)

POSITION/TITLE: PRESIDENT

ADDRESS: PO Box 163

CITY: DELPHOS STATE: OH ZIP: 45833

TELEPHONE: 419-339-9701 x. 202

ARE YOU REPRESENTING: YOURSELF X ORGANIZATION _____

DO YOU WISH TO TESTIFY ON

LEGISLATION (BILL NUMBER): NOT APPLICABLE

SPECIFIC ISSUE: FEE STRUCTURE ASSOCIATED WITH RIDE INSPECTION AND LICENSING

SUBJECT MATTER: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RIDE SAFETY DIVISION

DO YOU FAVOR _____ OR OPPOSE _____ THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION REGARDING THIS ISSUE?

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE GROUNDS ON WHICH YOU FAVOR OR OPPOSE SUCH ENACTMENT:

OPPOSED TO THE CURRENT FEE STRUCTURE AS UNFAIR TO SMALL BUSINESS AND DISPROPORTIONALLY DISTRIBUTES THE COST ASSOCIATED WITH ACTUAL WORK PERFORMED. CURRENT PRICING IS BASED ON A PER PIECE UNIT AND DOES NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ACTUAL WORK PERFORMED ASSOCIATED WITH EACH INSPECTION. COST OF LICENSING AND INSPECTION OF LARGER FIXED AMUSEMENT RIDES LIKE THE "WINDSEEKER" ONLY COST \$310.00 AND REQUIRES MULTIPLE DAYS AND STAFF TO COMPLETE IN COMPARISON TO A "BOUNCE HOUSE" WHICH REQUIRES 15 MINUTES FOR INSPECTION WITH 1 STAFF TO COMPLETE AT A COST OF \$255.

FEES CURRENTLY ARE BASED ON CALENDAR YEAR OF JAN. 1 – DEC. 31 AND PROVIDES NO PRO-RATED FEE OR ADJUSTMENT FOR MID-YEAR LICENSING AND INSPECTION.

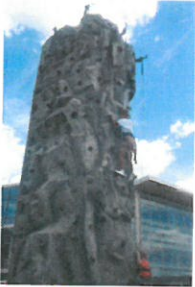
IN NEIGHBORING STATES OF INDIANA AND MICHIGAN, INFLATABLE UNITS ARE EXEMPT FROM THE SAME RULES APPLIED TO MECHANICAL AMUSEMENT RIDES AND ARE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS FOR INSPECTION IN KENTUCKY AND PENNSYLVANIA.

WILL YOU HAVE A WRITTEN STATEMENT, VISUAL AIDS, OR OTHER MATERIAL TO DISTRIBUTE?

Yes X No _____

(IF YES, PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES TO THE CHAIRMAN OR SECRETARY)

HOW MUCH TIME WILL YOUR TESTIMONY REQUIRE? 15 MINUTES _____



Rock Climbing



Bouncers



Slides



Casino Night

March 22, 2017

Finance Subcommittee on Agriculture, Development and Natural Resources
Attn: Representative Andy Thompson, Chairman
Ohio House of Representatives
Columbus, OH

Dear Chairman Thompson:

My name is Kevin Wiegand, President of UltraSound Special Events Inc. and my concern continues to increase regarding the longevity of the small business and the employees we support as an Ohio small business. Our business was established in 1990 and with being established over 25 years ago, continued to develop opportunities in the event business as bounce houses and inflatable games (or Adventure Attractions as ASTM now classifies them) were developed.

In Ohio, these types of units were once exempt from the licensing and inspection fees that have now increased to be one of the highest in the nation. Today there are over 3000 inflatable units licensed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture and these fees make up over 60% of revenue collected by the Ride Safety Division. Neighboring states of Indiana and Michigan continue to exempt inflatable units and do NOT inspect and license them with traditional carnival rides. It is a minority of US States have taken an approach to assess a fee or require inspection or licensing all together for inflatable units.

Other neighboring States of Kentucky charge \$50 per unit for inspection and licensing whereby Pennsylvania requires an educational and risk management approach to influence safety as an alternative to the per unit inspection fee model here in Ohio. Cost to take the testing is a mere \$50 per person and then requires an ongoing 16 hours of continuing education every 3 years. UltraSound Special Events currently has (3) staff members licensed in Pennsylvania.

In comparison of compliance costs for 2016 for UltraSound between the States whereby a fee is charged, Pennsylvania was \$450, Kentucky was \$2000 for 40 total units and \$11,895 for the same units in Ohio. Of particular concern is how the fees are assessed per "type" of unit here in Ohio:

Inflatable Ride Inspection & Licensing fee:	\$255.00
Kiddie Ride Inspection & Licensing fee:	\$250.00
Other Ride Inspection & Licensing fee:	\$310.00
Coaster Ride Inspection & Licensing fee:	\$1,350.00
Go Karts (in addition to other ride inspection fee):	\$5.00



Within the Ohio fee structure preferential treatment is given to the CARNIVAL RIDE / THEME PARK OPERATORS while the fees paid by the inflatable owners is 60% of the current budget. I would like to provide an example of why this unfairly assesses a bulk of the State inspection costs on those operating within the inflatable industry here in Ohio.

The "WindSeeker" is popular million dollar attraction located within the State and based on the fee schedule provided is assessed a total licensing and inspection fee of \$310. This amusement ride is 301' tall, carries 64 passengers, rotates at a speed of 25-30 mph, and flares out 45 degrees while ascending and descending the tower height. Inspection time typically varies between 2-3 days and requires the manpower of 2-3 guys.

Similarly, a multi-million dollar roller coaster ride inspection fee at an amusement park demonstrates a greater task of inspection with multiple days, multiple man hours, and time invested for a fee of \$1,350.00.

Using the most popular inflatable unit being manufactured and rented today as an example, a "bounce house" unit costing approximately \$2000 to purchase has a capacity of 4-6 children, uses a mechanical blower to inflate the unit, and stands 8-10' in height. A bounce house unit requires an inspection time of approximately 15 minutes by one inspector and requires a licensing and inspection cost of \$255.

Here is an assessment of cost associated with time and the cost to small business associated with the time of inspection from as recently as March 21, 2017:

(17) inflatable attractions were licensed and (2) Ohio Department of Agriculture Ride Safety employees completed the task in 3.5 hours signing into the facility at 9:00 a.m. and completing work at 12:30 p.m. for a total cost of \$4,335.00. Breaking down this timeframe, 7 hours of labor divided between 2 staff equal \$619.29/ hour or \$10.32/ minute in fees associated with our actual inspection. Using the inspection in Kentucky, the breakdown of time would include a total cost of \$850.00 for inspection with a time assessment of \$121.43/ hour or \$2.02/ minute.

I have been gathering data and working with Representative Bob Cupp for over a year and have achieved drafting a new fee proposal through LSC and propose a further study of the fee structure by the Finance Subcommittee on Agriculture Development. It appears the amount of small business operating within this segment of the industry continues to shrink as high fees continue to push companies out of business and jeopardize others.

The fees assessed within the Ohio Ride Safety program are extremely high compared to other States. We continue to pay an extremely high price for inspections on inflatables that take 15 minutes in comparison to the "million dollar thrill rides" that take multiple day and numbers of staff allocated to the task enjoy an insignificant and more affordable amount in regards to time allocated to the project and revenue.

Inspections continue to be based on a calendar year demanding the same fees paid to license an inflatable amusement for a 12 month period (Jan. – Dec.) as it does for a 1 month period (Dec.1 – Dec. 31) with no consideration for an adjustment of fee or 12 month period. ALL work and fees expire December 31 during each calendar year and that is not supportive of honest business practices.



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In creating an Amusement Ride Advisory Council, The Ohio Department of Agriculture continues to deny representation for the inflatable industry at every attempt claiming that there is already representation through the current representation of traditional amusement rides. Our industry representatives will tell you we do not have representation here in Ohio and through a revision of ASTM standards and reclassification as "Adventure Attractions", the definition of how inflatable attractions is being addressed has already been changing as different than those of traditional carnival and amusement park thrill rides.

I appreciate your time in hearing my testimony in regards to these issues. I am proud of my business and the success of our business and its employees. The current structure of the Ohio Ride Safety program is revenue based and does little to make the inflatable industry safer. Operating both safely and profitably is the only balance to sustaining a successful business.

We feel threatened as we continue to try and operate successfully and continually study cost of doing business. In presenting the information to you today, I feel there is improvement needed and I am willing to answer any additional questions.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to share information. Please contact me at 419-339-9701 x. 202 or by cell at 419-302-1036.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Wieging".

Kevin Wieging, President
UltraSound Special Events Inc.

CC: Rep. Cupp
enclosures

AMUSEMENT RIDE: INFLATABLE BOUNCE HOUSE

Bounce House – 196 sq ft of vinyl 8' in height, 4-6 children ages 4-12.

Ohio Department of Agriculture Annual Inspection Fee and Permit: **\$255**

Number of Ride Safety Inspectors: 1

Number of Days/Time to Inspect the ride annually: 15 minutes



AMUSEMENT RIDE: WINDSEEKER – 301 foot tall (30 stories) swing ride at several major Ohio theme parks. Seated in two-person swings with their feet dangling, riders will slowly begin rotating in a circular motion as the swings ascend the tower. At the top, the swings will be reaching speeds of 25–30 mph, flaring out almost 45 degrees from the tower. 64 riders.

Ohio Department of Agriculture Annual Inspection Fee and Permit: **\$310**

Number of Ride Safety Inspectors: 2-3

Number of Days to Inspect the ride annually: 2-3 days

