

House Bill 12

Sponsor Testimony

Good morning Chairman Hackett, Senator O'Brien , and members of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to HB 12, legislation that will designate the barn as the official historical architectural structure of the state.

This legislation is the work of five bright students from the Westerville City Schools Gifted Education Program. These determined students approached my office with the idea of recognizing the significance that the barn has played in our state by making it the official historical architectural structure of the state.

Recently, the state of Ohio has designated an official state artifact (the Adena pipe), the amphibian (the Spotted Salamander), the frog (the Bullfrog), and native fruit (the Pawpaw). These students felt strongly enough to reach out to their representative and see if they could have the ability to designate the official historical architectural structure and fill a void in our state record books.

As you may recall, in 1998 the Ohio Bicentennial Commission hired artist Scott Hagan to design and paint a mural on 88 barns, one in every county in the state, commemorating the momentous occasion of our state reaching the 200 year milestone. Mr. Hagan traveled over 65,000 miles and took 5 years to complete this campaign. This project was awarded a national Bronze Anvil award for Creative Tactics by Public Relations Society of America. All but one of the original works of art can still be seen today; sadly, one of the barns was destroyed by a tornado in 1998.

I believe that it is important to cherish and preserve the architectural relics that are such an important part of our rural heritage. Eleven states have developed programs to assist in the preservation and finding of new uses for historic barns and I feel that it is time that Ohio makes the step to officially recognize the barn so that we may hope to preserve the barns of this state for our future generations.

There was not a single opponent to this legislation and passed unanimously out of the House State and Local Government Committee and The House of Representatives. Chairman and members of the committee, I ask for your favorable consideration of this legislation and would be happy to address any questions you may have at this time.