



AGRICULTURE  
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date 5/21/18

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Organization Representing: The Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Inc

Testifying on Bill Number: H.B.392

Testimony:  Verbal  Written  Both

Testifying As:  Proponent  Opponent  Interested Party

Are you a Registered Lobbyist?  Yes  No

Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Ohio State Beekeepers Association

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May 22, 2018

### **Proponent Testimony- HB392 Apiary Owners Immunity**

Chairperson, Senator Bob Hackett, Vice Chairperson, Senator Frank Hoagland, Ranking Minority Member Senator Sean O'Brien, and Senators of the Senate Agricultural Committee, thank you for the opportunity to express our continued support of HB 392.

The Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Inc. has provided proponent testimony throughout this legislative process. *A summary of the facts and support for this bill follow:*

1. Senate Agricultural Committee's constituent connection equals 3,787 registered beekeepers from your respective districts.
2. Ohio has over 8,000 registered beekeepers.
3. Beekeeping today is an urban, suburban, and rural activity providing free pollination services for our crops, trees, shrubs, and flowers for all Ohioans.
4. Because apiaries are now located in more densely populated areas, there is an increased probability of human- honey bee interaction, and any sting, near or far, will be laid at the beekeeper's door, therefore the possibility of a lawsuit increasingly looms large. Stinging is a honey bee's last resort of protection – once she stings a person, she dies.
5. There are nearly 4,000 native pollinators in North America which prey on crop pests, pollinate native plants, and are either stinging insects or sting-less insects.
6. Many stings attributed to honey bees, may actually come from a native pollinator including wasps and yellow jackets. While lawsuits for a stinging incident in Ohio have been few, there is no winner in these legal actions. The beekeeper loses money and sleep, the public's perception of the beekeeping community is damaged, the person bringing the suit has yet to win, and burden is added to the court's already full dockets.
7. Ohio beekeepers contributed to Ohio's economy by providing over \$4 million worth of honey.
8. HB 392 will encourage the adherence to local and state ordinances and best management beekeeping practices, but also provide security to the beekeeping community, 4-H students,

community gardens, botanical gardens, and other destination locations that are improved by having an on-site apiary to ensure pollination for humans and wildlife alike.

9. One third of an Ohioans' food is made possible by pollinators.
10. Eleven of Ohio's eighteen biggest cash crops rely on insect pollination to produce that crop: cucumbers, pumpkins, peppers, peaches, cabbage, strawberries, squash, apples, tomatoes, alfalfa/clover hay, and maple syrup reap more than \$600M in pollination services by honey bees and native pollinators.
11. Educational destination venues in Ohio, such as Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm, Cleveland Botanical Garden, and the grounds of the Ohio State House, all feature live honey bee hives on their public property. These entities will also benefit from HB 392. These venues alone generate \$14,185,632 in tourism activities across Ohio.  
*HB 392 is supported by these respective organizations:*  
Laurie Cothran, Development & Marketing Manager  
Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm  
  
Jenny Pope, Director of Community Outreach & Education  
Franklin Park Conservatory & Botanical Gardens  
  
Jill Koski, President & CEO  
Cleveland Botanical Garden/Holden Forests & Gardens
12. The Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Inc. seeks to provide quality beekeeping education, teaching the industry best management practices of beekeeping, and to protect the long history of beekeeping in Ohio.
13. Twenty-nine county beekeeping associations also support HB 392.
14. Ohio is the historic home of the "father of *modern* beekeeping" Amos Ives Root, who, in 1869 led the movement to standardizing beekeeping equipment.
15. Rev. Lorenzo Langstroth, the "*father* of American Beekeeping," developed the movable frame hive and received a patent for the design in 1852. Rev. Langstroth is buried at Woodland Cemetery, in Dayton, Ohio.

Thank you for giving the Ohio State Beekeepers Association time to speak with you today. We would be pleased to answer any questions.

*Testimony formally submitted by:*

*Terry Lieberman-Smith, President of The Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Inc.*