



Working together for Ohio farmers to advance agriculture and strengthen our communities.

**Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Proponent Testimony on House Bill 352
Before the House Civil Justice Committee
Tony Seegers, Director of State Policy
November 19, 2019**

Chairman Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, on behalf of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and its members, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 352.

Currently, Ohio's employment discrimination laws are substantially different to its federal counterparts. This leads to financial, legal and administrative burdens on employers. For instance, the Ohio Supreme Court decision in *Cosgrove v. Williamsburg Mgmt. Company, Inc.*, 70 Ohio St.3d 281 (1994) established a six-year statute of limitations for employment law discrimination claims. This is the longest statute of limitations of any state and certainly not in line with federal law. Along with other issues, HB 352 will align our law more closely with federal law by creating a two-year statute of limitations.

Another example of the difference between state and federal law is that Ohio allows for costly and inefficient dual paths for simultaneously pursuing a discrimination claim through the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and the courts. This adds to an employer's legal costs and is not an efficient system. HB 352 will eliminate the dual avenue and replace it with a more fair and sensible one.

HB 352 will bring Ohio's employment discrimination law more in line with the federal scheme. This will bring more predictability for Ohio employers and for those who pursue their rights in fighting workplace discrimination.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present written testimony in support of HB 352.