

Chairman Hoagland, Vice-Chairman Schaffer, ranking member O'Brien, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, I'm here today in support of HB 665.

This is a common-sense reform bill. This bill has been worked on extensively by the Ohio Fair Managers Association, the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and other entities related to our county fairs.

I was president of the Harrison County Fair Board for 9 years, and I can tell you it is time to modernize and change the sections of code relating to our county fairs. This bill takes a deep dive into the ORC, but I'll share some highlights of what it does:

As all public entities, ag. Societies are audited by the Auditor of State, and current law requires different information be submitted to the ODAg and the Auditor's office -this bill will better align these reports so fairs aren't having to complete duplicative work in 2 different formats.

Another change is that under current law a local Ag society's debt cannot exceed 25% of the society's annual revenues, this bill will clarify that a society's annual payments for debt obligations cannot exceed 25% of its annual revenue, which will

give ag societies much needed flexibility, and if they fairgrounds is owned by the county commissioners the Ag Society will have to get their approval before incurring any debt.

This bill also has provisions to address some concerns during the current coronavirus pandemic. There are provisions to provide funding through the federal CARES Act to ag societites that have or canel their fairs. Also, it allows date flexibility in regards to harness racing while under any orders for the coronavirus.

The last thing I'll touch on is transparency. This bill allows financial information, ag society election information to be posted on fair websites, and specifies that ticket sales for annual exhibitions and annual fairs do not have to take place on fairgrounds. This is a much needed change for transparency and flexibility so we can make it easier to go to our county fairs.

We worked on this bill extensively in the House Agriculture & Rural Development Committee

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As you all know, County fairs are a fabric of our communities. They are important to our FFA and 4-H kids, and this bill is much needed. I ask for your favorable support of HB 665 and will take any questions you may have. Thank you.

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