

Ohio Senate
Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee
HC3: Healthy Choices Caring Communities

Good morning, Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chair Schaffer, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony as an **opponent** in consideration of **House Bill 674**.

My name is Elizabeth Thomas and I work in Fulton County I am concerned by this effort to weaken and remove alcohol policies in Ohio. Many of these laws and policies regulating the availability and access of alcohol are based on years of scientific evidence and practice to reduce excessive alcohol consumption (binge, heavy, underage drinking, etc.), alcohol-related injuries, hospitalizations, and mortality.

Addressing economic impact of the pandemic is important, but doing so in an irresponsible way, with little-to-no consumer protections is irresponsible and will put our youth, vulnerable populations, and communities at risk.

- **In the age of social media, companies benefit from the ability to communicate with consumers for free at all hours every day of the week. Allowing this tool to be used by alcohol distributors, manufactures, trade marketing professionals, solicitors, or brokers of alcoholic beverages will benefit the industry but also create increased risk to our youth if the proper advertising guidelines are not in place.**
- **Historically the tobacco industry, and now the e-cigarette industry, have targeted our young people to ensure they have consumers for their products for decades as we know the younger an individual starts to use substances, their use is significantly more likely to continue into adulthood. Our young people spend a significant amount of time on social media and will be inundated with advertising, specifically designed to be relevant and engaging to their age group.**

Please protect my community by halting the passage of HB 669.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth Thomas, MSW/LSW, OCPS
Program Director, HC3: Healthy Choices Caring Communities