



Ohio Fair Managers Association
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Good Afternoon Chairman Hoagland, Vice Chairman Schaffer and Ranking Member O'Brien and all members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 665.

My name is Rod Arter and I am the current President of the OFMA. My home fair is the Hartford Fair, the Biggest Little Fair in the World! I have been involved in my local fair board for as long as I can remember, and the importance of the fair has always been instilled in me.

County fairs are governed by the Ohio Revised Code. Most sections governing fairs are in Chapter 1711. When a new board member gets elected to their local fair board, they are given a copy of the "Red Book". This is a book, that has a red cover, with all of the code sections that apply to county fairs. These laws cover things like elections, our annual financial reporting to the state, lines of credit, maintenance of the ground, aspects of our relationship with our county and so on.

Over the years it has become increasingly clear that the Red Book needed modernized. Many of our code sections have not been revised since at least 1953. It is difficult to know how far back it has actually been since they've been in effect because 1953 is when the code was revised and renumbered from the previous Ohio General Code and the Ohio Revised Code was created.

The OFMA started a working group to propose sweeping changes to the Red Book. We started on page one and went through the entire document. The result is House Bill 665. Many of the changes are not substantive but truly just bringing the ORC into modern times. The code sections we propose repealing are outdated and didn't serve any meaningful purpose.

I would like to go through some substantive changes with you and my colleague OFMA Director at Large Greta Gray will also be reviewing some of the changes.

- Distributions from county commissioners – In the bill we are proposing doubling the investment we get from the county commissions from \$800 to \$1600. Now, we understand doubling might seem excessive. However, in today's dollars that \$800 should be closer to \$7700. We are also proposing removing reimbursement caps from junior fair reimbursement to fairs from the county commissioners. We believe if counties want to support more of the junior fair activities, the law should not prohibit them from doing so.
- Beers sales to pay for insurance – We have proposed eliminating the requirement the fairs use the proceeds of beer sales to first pay the insurance on their buildings. We are proposing this change because another section of law, 1711.24, requires the county commissions to pay the insurance on the buildings. All building on county fair grounds are insured by their respective county commissioners, so this language did not make sense. Further, beer sales are often in partnership with other community

non-profits, so fair income from beer sales is minimal. Additionally, there is a small number of fairs that even sell beer on their grounds.

- Amusement Ride Safety sections – These sections are being renumbered at the request of LSC.
- Harness Racing – There are several changes regarding harness racing at county fairs included in HB 665. These changes allow for some additional flexibility for conducting harness racing. COVID-19 challenges have brought to light some needed changes in this area. Testimony from the Ohio Harness Horsemen Association will go into more detail on these changes.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for your consideration today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.