



Ohio Fair Managers Association
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Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams and all members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to you on Senate Bill 346 that would repeal House Bill 6 that was enacted earlier in the General Assembly. On behalf of the Ohio Fair Managers Association (OFMA), the statewide association representing Ohio's 95 county fairs, independent fairs and the Ohio State Fair, we ask that you retain and **not** repeal section 4928.80. This section gave much need relief to fairs from a demand rider on their electric bills.

As you surely know, county and independent fairs are the cornerstone event for many communities in the state. We are a showcase for Ohio's agriculture and 4-H programs, and we provide an opportunity for families to have fun together. Ohio has a long tradition of supporting county fairs and OFMA members pride themselves on offering a great event for their communities. As you can imagine, this year we have seen our share of struggles. Our fairs have done their best to offer junior fair activities during the COVID-19 shutdowns. We have faced ever changing guidance from the state and we are so proud that our fair boards have remained dedicated to their communities. But this has not been easy for them. In addition to the losses faced with the closures and limitations put on us for our annual fairs, we have also seen significant losses because of other event cancelations and closures. The International Association of Fairs and Expositions estimates the total loss to fairs is nearing \$4 billion.

Speaking specifically to the issue before you, county fairs operate during the summer months, a time when energy bills are traditionally highest for all users. However, at other times throughout the year when fairs are not taking place, our members use considerably less electricity. Still, since our members use their highest amount of electricity during the peak summer months, many have noted that they were charged higher rates all year round to account for that peak demand during the short period of in-season time.

Recognizing this unique scenario, the Legislature included a provision in HB 6 that restructured county fairs' rate schedules and designs. Utility companies have already submitted and had their plans approved by the PUCO to comply with this section. These new rate structures have already gone into effect and our having the intended effect. We have heard from our effected members that it is saving them up to \$10,000 per year.

At a time when county fairs have never seen such financial hardship, please do not repeal a law that has demonstrated to be a great cost saver for them. This section of the law has already been implemented, so it would seem to us to be unnecessarily complicated to reverse course when the destination has already been reached.

Thank you for considering this perspective of the OFMA.