



50 Bell Hollow Road • Latham, Ohio 45646 • (937) 588-3725

[www.longsretreat.com](http://www.longsretreat.com)

December 2, 2020

My name is Brya Long, and I represent Long's Retreat Family Resort, in Western Pike County. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 355. This proposed bill is very near and dear to my heart, and to that of my family. In addition, it is extremely important to privately-owned campground owners, like us at Long's Retreat. We are a family business that was started in 1971 by Eric Long, my father, a local young man with a few acres of land and a big imagination. What began as a small campground has grown into something nobody ever expected. Each year has brought new additions and improvements, and it continues to keep expanding today. As the top tourist attraction in Pike County, we are located in an extremely rural area of the state, and almost all our visitors are surprised to find us here! Hard work and personalized customer service set us apart from other places; we take a lot of pride in our name and our business. We are also proud members of the Ohio Campground Owners Association, who also gives support for this bill.

It is getting harder and harder to successfully operate a campground. As my dad often says, "What was ok back then is not ok now." We face obstacles every single day from the EPA, state and local health departments, the Department of Agriculture, various inspections, permits, and more. These rules and regulations are put in place to protect our customers and guests, so they can expect a safe place to visit. Yet who protects us business owners from frivolous lawsuits in today's "sue-hungry" society? We are also challenged with potential insurance claims from these risks inherent to camping, and feel that at some point, the public must take responsibility for their own actions.

I can name a few examples of injuries that occurred from risks involved with being in the outdoors in recent years. We have had a small child fall into a campfire and burn his foot, a young kid wreck his bike into a tree and sustain injuries, as well as an intoxicated adult withstand whiplash after diving into a non-swimming area of the lake. These are just three of the examples where we have paid medical bills and/or insurance premiums, even though these accidents were just that—accidents—and we had no cause for negligence or fault.

We have also faced cases where a guest has been injured on our Attractions. Since those are licensed by the state, specifically the Ohio Department of Agriculture Amusement Ride Safety and Fairs, we understand that those examples would NOT fall under the protection of this bill. When one of our guests hurt his ankle on one of our waterslides, we understood that although it was a total accident, we were ultimately responsible

I know I speak for most, if not all, campgrounds when I say we would be happy to post any necessary signage as part of HB 355, in order to demonstrate and display that it is understood by all those visiting our park that any risk inherent to camping is to be done at your own risk.

I appreciate the time to testify and I would be happy to provide any further information!