

Greater Ohio Showmen's Association
P.O. Box 43
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December 8, 2020

House Bill 621
Proponent testimony
Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee



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Chairman McColley, Vice Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio and all members of the Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide supportive comments on House Bill 621 on behalf of the Greater Ohio Showmen's Association. The GOSA is a group of over 400 members across the state of Ohio who represent the Outdoor Amusement Industry. Our membership is comprised of individuals, families and small businesses that own and operate the various rides, games and food concessions you find at local fairs and events across our state.

Early in the pandemic, the health orders and closures picked winners and losers. I am sorry to say, the members of the GOSA were the losers. As you heard from the sponsors last week, all businesses are essential. To our members, this is a livelihood and a family endeavor. The closure and cancellations of fairs and festivals have left us rudderless and without a way to make ends meet. Some food concessions were able to operate in limited fashion at some county fairs and some were able to be creative in finding other ways to generate income. But it pales in comparison to a "normal" year.

As for rides, it is difficult for our members to understand why an Ohioan could ride an amusement ride at one of the large parks, but our mobile rides were prohibited from operating. House Bill 621 would ensure parity going forward. There is no reason our members couldn't adhere to the safety protocols of other similar businesses. The same can be said for our game operator members. Our games can be played safely and should not have had to be shut down completely and prohibited for operating at county fairs under the Department of Health orders.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has left most of our members unable to operate and has created economic challenges we can't even begin to quantify, we remain optimistic that 2021 will allow us to return to normal and our members will be able to once again offer Ohioans fun and safe entertainment. House Bill 621 is an important piece to that mission. We ask for the legislature's favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Drake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Drake, President