



STATEMENT OF MATT COLE
IN SUPPORT OF SB-102

My name is Matt Cole and I have been brewing beer both as a homebrewer and as a professional brewer for 30 years. I am the brewmaster and one of the owners of the Fat Heads Brewery in Cleveland, Ohio. I am a member of the Ohio Craft Brewers Association that has agreed to support this bill. I am also an avid supporter of the Society of Northeast Ohio Brewers, a homebrewing club based in Cleveland, Ohio.

I am expressing my support for Senate Bill SB-102 which will codify into the Ohio Liquor Law what is permitted by 27 CFR Section 25.206 which legalized the homebrewing of beer in the United States in 1978. This will remove any obstacles to the transporting and serving of small amounts of homebrewed beer, cider, and mead for evaluation at events like competitions and club meetings (permitted under the above federal law) which could be held at places such as a commercial brewery and eliminates any temporary liquor permit requirements from the Ohio Department of Liquor Control (ODL). These types of events allow homebrewers who aspire to enter the professional brewing arena a chance to have their beers, ciders, and meads evaluated by their peers at these events which are closed to the general public. It allows them to receive valuable feedback before making decisions to embark on a professional brewing career. I gained the benefits of such knowledge from this feedback when I was a homebrewer as have many other professional brewers in our state. In addition, a future national convention like Homebrew Con (also permitted under the above federal law) could again be held in Ohio without the need to obtain a state issued temporary liquor permit from the ODL. Homebrew Con provides educational ideas for those dreaming of a pro brewing career and generates both local and state tax revenues. Those who decide to turn pro based on what they have learned from each of the above events will also expand the local, state, and federal tax base.

I understand that the concerns of the ODL with regard to the transportation and serving of untaxed alcohol (homebrewed beer, cider, and mead) at such events. However, as mentioned above, these events are closed to the general public and passage of this bill by the state legislature should not be a problem.

Matthew Cole