

79TH HOUSE DISTRICT

PARTS OF CLARK COUNTY
INCLUDING: SPRINGFIELD, NEW CARLISLE,
SOUTH CHARLESTON, AND ENON

COMMITTEES

CHAIR: AGRICULTURE & RURAL
DEVELOPMENT
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



COLUMBUS OFFICE

VERN RIFFE CENTER
77 SOUTH HIGH STREET 13TH FLOOR
COLUMBUS, OH 43215-0253
PHONE: (614) 466-2038
REP79@OHIOHOUSE.GOV

State Representative Kyle Koehler Ohio House of Representatives

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the Senate Ag and Conservation Committee – thank you for allowing testimony on House Bill 507 – a bill that started out as a very straightforward bill that only changed one word in the Ohio Revised Code.

The origin of House Bill 507 is very simple. Last summer, I was approached by Sash Rittenhouse, former President of the Ohio Cattlemen’s Association and an active 4H leader in my district. She asked why 4H families were required to buy six turkey chicks each year when their child was only allowed to show one turkey at the fair. Besides an issue with raising all six turkeys and only showing the one, the critical issue for many 4H participants is finding someone to “process” all six turkeys after they have been raised.

As it turns out, since 1971, Ohio law has prohibited poultry younger than four weeks old to be sold, given away, or distributed in lots less than six. This law was brought about at a time where chicks were primarily shipped by mail – where a lot of six was determined to be safest for the chicks. This is no longer the case.

This law is outdated and was passed with a provision to prohibit the practice of using artificial coloring to dye baby rabbits and chicks. Something I remember receiving as a young five year old. In short, with the support of the Ohio Poultry Association, HB 507 was drafted to update this ORC statute and allow chicks to be sold in lots of three.

Many have asked why I didn’t attempt to do away with the minimum requirement altogether. In short, for the purposes of tracking disease outbreaks amount poultry flocks, the Ohio Poultry Association has been clear that a lot minimum of three is ideal for identifying the location of owners and quickly tracking possible contagion points.

Finally, like all other industries, Ohio’s meat processors have experienced major supply chain disruptions. Hobby farmers in my district were waiting months for available appointments to have their livestock harvested. There are simply not enough meat processors to service demand and is the main reason we all approved a \$250,000 meat processing investment grant in the Operating Budget this GA.

By decreasing the minimum purchase requirement for poultry chicks, we are hopeful consumers will be able to purchase the number of birds that is right for them and, consequently, provide relief to the already maxed out poultry processing industry.

Finally, as House Bill 507 passed the Ohio House this past month, I worked with Director Pelanda and the Ohio Department of Agriculture to add an amendment that updates outdated food processing guidelines for everything from what can be used to clean apples to how we process vinegar kegs. I have asked ODA to again testify in this committee on these amendments during proponent testimony.

House Bill 507 passed out of the House Agriculture & Conservation Committee on a 7-0 vote and off the House floor with a 96-0 vote. The bill has had no opposition.

Thank you, again, for allowing me to testify. I will now stand for questions!

77 SOUTH HIGH STREET, COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-6111
www.ohiohouse.gov