



*Ohio Sheep Improvement*  
ASSOCIATION

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**Ohio Senate Finance Committee  
Substitute House Bill 110 Interested Party Testimony  
Roger High, Executive Director  
May 19, 2021**

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on language impacting animal agriculture in House Bill 110.

I represent Ohio's sheep, lamb and wool industry, as well as a growing meat and dairy goat industry and a camelid (Llama and Alpaca) industry. There are many disease issues that fall under this segment of livestock agriculture, which we refer to as Small Ruminants; therefore, I urge your support for an amendment, SC 2954, to Sub. H.B. 110 to increase funding for the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Animal Health Programs by \$2,631,000 in FY '22 and \$2,455,000 in FY '23. The funds would provide for much needed staffing and a client portal system for the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (ADDL).

**Specific to Ohio's sheep, lamb and wool industry:** Ohio ranks as the largest sheep, lamb, and wool producing state east of the Mississippi River, placing Ohio 12<sup>th</sup> in overall sheep and lamb production in the United States. The sheep, lamb, and wool industry contributes approximately \$25 million dollars annually to Ohio's economy. There are approximately 3,200 sheep, lamb, and wool full time and part time operations across the state, ranking Ohio as the state with the fifth highest number of sheep, lamb and wool operations in the country. In order for the state's sheep, lamb and wool industries to remain leading producers in the nation, Ohio needs to make a substantial investment in its animal health infrastructure.

I do not have the specifics of the meat and dairy goat industry as well as the Llama and Alpaca industries, but the need for the success for the entire small ruminant industry is significant in Ohio's agriculture and livestock landscape.

**Question is: How do the Veterinarians that work with sheep, lamb, meat and dairy goats, llama's and alpaca's utilize the Ohio Department of Agriculture Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory?**

Primary services provided to Ohio's "small ruminant" industry include: abortion diagnostics as disease mechanism abortions such as campylobacter, chlamydia, and toxoplasmosis are one of the leading causes of lost income on our operations, necropsies to identify animal disease mortality issues and concerns, fecal evaluation to assist in the identification of internal parasite

issues—with internal parasites, especially *Haemonchus Contortus* (Barber-pole worm) being financially devastating to our small ruminant operations. There are other tests for the small ruminant industry that are needed by the ODA's ADDL but they have not been able to perform them due to lack of funding and staff; these diseases include Caseous Lymphadenitis and Scrapie testing, both of which are diseases that are very economically devastating to our industry.

I thank you for the support that this industry has had over the years but believe that in our industry, as with all of the rest of the livestock industry, that diseases are one of the most significant threats to animal production, food safety, and the general farm economy. Ohio's farmers and ranchers rely on Ohio's ADDL for safe animal movement, diagnosis of diseases, and confirmation of the state's livestock and poultry's health status.

As an issue of significant importance, we respectfully ask for your favorable support of additional investment in the state's animal health program. The future economic growth of agriculture in Ohio is dependent upon an ADDL capable of meeting the industry's demands. I am happy to take any questions you may have.