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President
RYAN AUGSBURGER

November 9, 2021

The Honorable Steve Wilson
Chairman
Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
1st Floor N., Rm. 125
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Senate Bill 184 – Written Proponent Testimony

Dear Chairman Wilson:

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) appreciates the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on Senate Bill 184.

E-commerce has become a ubiquitous method of consumer purchasing, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, online marketplaces became even more prevalent as a convenient and safe option for individuals who were sheltering in place.

While online shopping is a suitable option for many consumers, it also provides a highly profitable arena for those selling counterfeit or stolen goods. Unfortunately, individuals with ill intent can readily hide behind the anonymity of online marketplaces – harming legitimate companies and their brands and taking advantage of consumers.

Ohio manufacturers are the largest contributing sector to the state's GDP. In 2018, they produced more than \$112.2 billion worth of goods. As the prevalence of fake and stolen merchandise sales rises, it is important that online retailers have a basic knowledge of third-party sellers. Requiring validation of these sellers on the front end will allow Ohio manufacturers to protect their brands and safeguard their intellectual property. Moreover, it will improve seller transparency for consumers and ensure customer trust in the products they are buying.

By requiring online marketplaces to verify basic information about third-party sellers, Senate Bill 184 would ensure these online platforms have a minimum standard of seller verification, protecting both consumers and legitimate businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. Please feel free to reach out should you or the committee have any questions.

Sincerely,

Rachael Carl
Director, Public Policy Services