

91st House District

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Committees

Chairman
Government Oversight

Finance, Agriculture,
Development, and Natural
Resources Subcommittee

Insurance

Public Utilities

Bob Peterson
State Representative

Sponsor Testimony
H. B. 503

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Klopfenstein, Ranking Member Brent, and other members of the House Agriculture Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony on House Bill 503.

Before we dive into the bill itself, let's talk about what 'feral swine' are and the problem facing Ohio. The Ohio Pork Council states that "[f]eral, or 'wild' pigs are an invasive, non-native species to Ohio and many parts of North America. They may be descendants of escaped, released pigs, or imported swine and are known to multiply very quickly." These are not the typical, everyday pig that we see at our county fairs. These are animals that are a nuisance to landowners around the nation and are a threat to Ohio's pork economy. Currently, feral swine are found in Adams, Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Scioto, and Vinton counties and are continuously being tracked by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Feral swine are affecting the nation through physical and economic damage. It is estimated that they have done an estimated \$1.5 billion in damages per year; \$800 million of that to our crops and the rest to our water and soil quality, and our natural vegetation. These nuisances are also known carriers of 30 different diseases that are dangerous to both humans and livestock such as African Swine Fever (ASF) and Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD). African Swine Fever, if contracting into our commercial pig population, would be a devastating hit to our economy and could cost Ohio around \$2.5 billion.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony. After my joint-sponsor speaks, we would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Bob Peterson
State Representative
Ohio's 91st House District