



Ohio Cattlemen's Association

**Ohio Cattlemen's Association
Proponent Testimony on HB 503
Before the House Agriculture Committee
June 4, 2024**

Chairman Jones, Vice Chair Klopfenstein, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, my name is Elizabeth Harsh and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Cattlemen's Association ("OCA"). On behalf of the OCA and its members, I appreciate the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 503.

OCA is a membership organization that represents the business interests important to farm families that raise cattle. It serves as the voice of Ohio's cattle industry, including cattle breeders, cow/calf producers and feeders, and works to enhance the business climate necessary for industry success. OCA is a trusted leader and respected source of industry information for Ohio's cattle and beef industry. The association's mission is to maintain the profitability and growth of the state's industry, while providing consumers with safe and wholesome beef.

Ohio's cattle farmers support HB 503 because its passage will also protect the cattle industry from the ever-present and economically devastating threat of foreign animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease. Feral swine are super spreaders of numerous diseases, serve as an efficient vector of multiple disease pathogens, and carry up to 40 parasites. Besides being a transmitter of disease, they destroy crops, fields, and pastures wherever they appear, as well as degrade the soil and water quality. Other states and European countries have been waging a war against feral swine for years. With passage of HB 503, Ohio can prevent the importation of feral swine and prohibit their feeding of garbage, thus helping to cut off a ready food supply.

Thank you again Chairman Jones and members of the House Agriculture Committee for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony for HB 503. We urge its passage from committee.