

Dear Representative Don Jones and the Ohio House of Representatives' Agriculture Committee,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for the Ohio Healthy Soils Task Force. In my full-time role, I serve as Director of the Environmental Professionals Network at The Ohio State University and as a Senior Lecturer in Ohio State's School of Environment and Natural Resources. Recognizing the significant soil health market opportunities present in our state, I took the initiative in 2021 to form a private benefit corporation with Dr. Leonardo Deiss, a soil health and agronomic expert formerly based in Wooster, Ohio. Together, we utilize advanced soil science methods to measure and accurately predict soil carbon sequestration in Ohio's agricultural lands.

Our work has garnered substantial support, receiving a \$2.9 million investment from the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. Since 2023, over 10 organizations, including private and non-profit entities, have contributed more than \$200,000 in additional support. These resources have enabled us to assess and provide financial compensation for healthy soils on 16 farms in southwest Ohio, with each farm receiving up to \$20,000 annually in performance payments. These farms range in size from smaller, urban farms in Dayton and surrounding communities to larger-scale livestock and row-crop operations managing ground across the region.

Healthy soils are crucial because they sustain life on Earth by providing essential nutrients, clean air, and water. They support robust plant growth, increase crop yields, and play a significant role in our region's mitigation of climate change. I firmly believe that the work of the Ohio Healthy Soils Task Force is vital for the future of our state's environment and agriculture.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your support for the Healthy Soils Task Force Bill.