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Committees:

Chair - Behavioral Health
Finance
Higher Education
Finance Subcommittee on
Agriculture, development,
and natural resources

Gail Pavliga
State Representative

Good afternoon. Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, and Ranking member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 504 or Hayden's Law. I would like to begin with how this legislation came about. Hayden Kaiser was a 25-year-old JV and assistant varsity soccer coach at Solon High School. Hayden decided to drive out to a bar on June 4th, 2021, unfortunately Hayden Kaiser would not make it home that night. Hayden spent hours at the bar and even racked up a \$170 bar tab. Yet somehow, he made his way to his car and proceeded to drive home. Again, the bar served Hayden \$170 worth of alcohol, then handed him his check, and they let him exit the bar and enter his vehicle, without providing any sort of assistance. I'm assuming most everyone here has been to a bar, but for reference an average beer at a bar in Ohio is around \$7, he spent 170. Sadly, Hayden Kaiser got in an accident and passed away, with a reported blood alcohol level three times the legal limit.

This legislation that I am presenting to the civil justice committee today, intends to help educate servers across the state by requiring that the Superintendent of Liquor Control creates and administers a training program for alcohol permit holders and their employees. The training program would be created at the Superintendent's discretion. However, there are three instructions and a skills course that must be included. The first one being the inclusion of instructions on the laws and rules surrounding the sale of alcohol in Ohio. The second is instructions on how to prevent the service of alcohol to people under the legal age of 21. The third and last instruction would be training on recognizing when to decrease and/or cut off the service of alcohol to a customer exhibiting sign of excessive intoxication. The skills course included in the required program would be conflict management skills when dealing with delicate situations that may arise due to alcohol consumption. By leaving the specifics of the training program to the superintendent, it ensures that the experts in this area are allowed to administer their knowledge and expertise to the people actually serving the beverages.

Hayden's law also protects businesses from being civilly liable from related situations that arise. So long as the employees and owner of an establishment have followed the teachings of the training program laid out by the superintendent of liquor control, they cannot be liable. We believe that by coupling the requirement of the training program and protections for businesses from lawsuits, this legislation is in the best interest for all parties: obviously the customers, but also the businesses and the superintendent of liquor control.

There is no doubt that people need to be responsible for themselves and their actions, and I would like to acknowledge the fact that these unfortunate events are not solely the bars' fault. We all know that alcohol in too much quantity is dangerous, that is no secret and the actions of an individual are not the businesses' fault. However, bartenders, servers and owners should know

more about ways to prevent and handle these very delicate situations and hopefully this program will save lives. I hope this committee will also see the importance of this bill, thank you Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, and Ranking member Isaacsohn, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee for hearing my testimony today.