



Substitute House Bill 33 Proponent Testimony
Ohio House of Representatives Finance Committee
Devin Fuhrman, Chief Agriculture and Sponsors Relations Officer

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Chairman Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you as a strong proponent of Amendment HC2737, under consideration for inclusion in Sub-House Bill 33 to help the agricultural industry meet the ever-changing concerns of its stakeholders. I also want to quickly thank our partners at the Ohio Farm Bureau, who are in the room today and are also fully supportive of the proposed amendment.

My name is Devin Fuhrman and I serve as Nationwide's Chief Agriculture and Sponsor Relations Officer. Nationwide is headquartered in Columbus, Ohio and is proud to provide thousands of jobs in the state and 1.25 million policies to Ohio residents. Nationwide was founded by Ohio farmers in 1926 and since that time has remained committed to supporting and providing solutions to help advance American agriculture. Helping our customers thrive in today's competitive farm, ranch, and commercial agribusiness environment, Nationwide is proud to be the No. 1 insurer of farms and ranches in the U.S. We're also the exclusive property-casualty insurer for Ohio Farm Bureau, seven other state Farm Bureaus and two of the nation's largest farmer-owned cooperatives.

Today, I am asking for your consideration to include amendment HC2737, which makes an appropriation for The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) request for support of a new world-class Multispecies Animal Learning Center (MALC). Nationwide and The Ohio State University share a rich and storied history of supporting the agriculture industry and the infrastructure that holds them together, aligned with the needs of the Ohio Farm Bureau and all Ag and Farm stakeholders. With a passion for protecting and advancing the lives of farmers, ranchers, and commercial agribusiness, this collaboration is a natural fit to develop solutions supporting and growing the agriculture ecosystem.

Nationwide and CFAES are working together to encourage the development of new solutions that will help the future of agriculture to better understand, manage and mitigate risk. Our company has invested through the Nationwide Foundation in the Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory, which utilizes 261 acres on the CFAES Columbus campus to be the future of the college, the university, Ohio, and the world. CFAES recently celebrated the ribbon cutting of the Controlled Environment Agriculture Research Complex (CEARC), which uses emerging technology to conduct research and controlled environmental factors such as light, humidity, temperature, and nutrients, which leads to an extended growing season, reduced waste, and more high-quality crops.

The next priority is to begin the groundbreaking for the Multispecies Animal Learning Center, which will bring people and animals together for hands-on learning, public events, and Extension programming. Practicing and teaching precision agriculture in animal production are among the many

motivations behind the center. As is having an appropriate setting for public discussions and research involving animal welfare and food production. Here is how this new center will benefit Ohio:

- This facility will allow CFAES to educate the general public on animal agriculture and its importance to the state of Ohio.
- It will provide a state-of-the-art teaching and extension facility for students and producers and support education for Ohio State students, K-12 students, and learners across the lifespan.
- The multispecies facility will support teaching in key STEM areas and work force development for the wide array of careers available in working with animals.
- It will allow simulation of issues and challenges facing the industry for research and extension.
- It will increase the ability to retain and recruit top talent in the agriculture industry to CFAES.
- The facility will expand the ability to partner with leading industries in animal agriculture from genetics and nutrition to manure management and disease mitigation.
- And increase the visibility of advances in animal agriculture to the next generation of students who represent the pipeline for agricultural careers and the public CFAES engages at Waterman.

The Nationwide Foundation has pledged support in the MALC as another example of public private partnership. Agriculture is a part of Nationwide's DNA, and we believe it's important to invest in resources that pave the way for a vibrant and robust food supply chain. The Center will be an incubator for those groundbreaking ideas, while furthering the workforce that serves animal production.

Through collaborative efforts with state Farm Bureaus, ag cooperatives, farm credit associations and land grant universities like The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, Nationwide continues to be a leader in the support of agriculture across the country.

Again, thank you for your consideration to support the inclusion of Amendment HC2737 in Sub-HB 33. Nationwide is linked by heritage and purpose to serve and protect what matters most to our customers and communities, including the agriculture industry and the current and future generations it supports.