

Members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I'm Louis Farkas, CEO/COO of Farkas Farms LLC, a Level 2 cultivation facility in Lagrange Township, Ohio. The proposed changes in HB86 and the potential HB354 raise concerns about our ability to compete and combat the black market effectively. Ohio must offer quality products with a fair tax rate to retain both tax dollars and consumers. The current 15% tax rate and THC concentrations deviate significantly from other state programs, jeopardizing our competitiveness. To keep consumers within Ohio, I propose granting Level 2 cultivators expanded canopy space and two dispensaries, along with two dispensaries for independent processors during the recreational program rollout. This empowers local businesses, ensuring they shape their own destinies rather than having to rely on others. We must prevent Ohioan tax dollars from funding other states due to an unfair program. Additionally, allocating tax revenue to host cities will foster an evenly dispersed marketplace. Ohio's recreational program's longevity and success depend on a well-structured framework. Let's secure the future of our industry. Thank you.