



OHIO SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

Proponent Testimony - House Bill 503
Ohio Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
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Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and other members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on House Bill 503. This is important legislation to contain and counter Ohio's growing feral swine infestation.

With populations throughout the United States, this invasive animal negatively impacts everything from agriculture and the environment to human health and public safety. According to the United State Department of Agriculture, feral swine can multiply faster than any other large mammal and they have few natural predators.

The damage feral swine cause is significant. Feral swine cause at least \$1.5 billion in economic damages per year. This includes control costs, agricultural production losses, and non-production losses like damage to infrastructure.

Feral swine damage crops and destroy fields, reducing crop yield, with their feeding, rooting, trampling, and wallowing behaviors. Often, the damaged land becomes vulnerable to erosion and non-native, invasive plant growth. In addition, soil disturbance and vegetation loss from feral swine damage increases erosion and degrades water quality.

Feral swine can carry at least 30 diseases and nearly 40 types of parasites that may affect people, pets, livestock, and wildlife. Feral swine can spread these diseases to livestock. This causes economic losses such as decreased production, reduced feed efficiency (less food intake affects animal growth and overall health), lower reproductive success and increased mortality in the herd, and higher costs for veterinary care. Feral swine are omnivorous, meaning they eat just about anything. They can kill calves and lambs, and adult livestock are vulnerable to predation while giving birth.

House Bill 503 and its prohibitions against transporting, possessing, or releasing wild boar or feral swine into the wild is important new policy for our state. These policies along with other provisions in the bill will help us contain and counter the growth of this invasive species in Ohio.