



To: Ohio Senate – Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

RE: House Bill 33

May 8, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

As someone who is a resident of Morgan County and worked in the tourism industry for over 20 years, both in the county and surrounding area, I am aware of the value and importance of the area now known as Jesse Owens State Park. I am currently working with Ohio's Winding Road, a locally driven economic development initiative that envisions an experienced-based economy focused on outdoor recreation, authentic assets, and local amenities, something found, in abundance, at Jesse Owens State Park.

The additional funding requested by ODNR in House Bill 33 is critical to the long-term economic impact of the Jesse Owens State Park and its place in advancing the quality of outdoor recreation found in Morgan County. Already known for its hunting, fishing, and hiking, the addition of quality camping sites, cabins, visitor center and an onsite naturalist will further increase the use of and overnight visits to the park and the county. Investment in outdoor recreation in Southeast Ohio is on the rise: Appalachian Regional Commission POWER funds and Appalachian Community Grant funds going to ORCA (Outdoor Recreation Council of Appalachia) and the Battelle award to the Wilds. The planned improvements to Jesse Owens State Park will serve to compliment the other sources and make Morgan County a more competitive player in this expanding industry.

On behalf of myself and Ohio's Winding Road, I am urging the legislature to approve the ODNR request found in House Bill 33 for additional funds and to support its proposed improvements for Jesse Owens State Park. This investment will benefit not only the park but the surrounding communities and businesses that serve both residents and visitors.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

*Amy Grove*

Amy Grove, Ohio's Winding Road