

Testimony of Scott Cardwell  
Phoenix Brewing Company  
Mansfield, Ohio

June 7, 2023

Senate Bill 33

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the committee, my name is Scott Cardwell and I'm an owner of The Phoenix Brewing Company in Mansfield, Ohio.

Driven by a love for craft beer and a passion for brewing, The Phoenix Brewing Company was founded by local beer enthusiasts looking to bring a craft beer revival to Mansfield. Located near the original pre-prohibition brewery district in the restored former Schroer Funeral Home and Mortuary, the Phoenix took flight in April, 2014. Our beers are brewed with our original 5-barrel brewhouse supplying our taproom and also with an expansion 20-barrel production system used mostly for distribution.

The Phoenix Brewing Company has become a community gathering place where we host live music and other events for residents. Since our beginnings in 2014, we have also striven to support and raise awareness about local and national non-profit charities and organizations in and out of the brewing industry. This is done through sponsorships, special beer releases, fundraising events, apparel sales, and more. These non-profits have been closest to the hearts of both owners and employees and we have been blessed to have an amazing craft beer community helping us to do better for others through brewing.

Although The Phoenix Brewing Company has expanded its reach over much of the northern half of the state, it is NOT currently in a distribution contract by design. The provisions of Ohio law that require me to sue in court and wait for a judge to determine if I can get out of my contract effectively trap a small brewer like myself in a contract for life. The brewery simply cannot afford the legal expenses associated with it. We have the capacity and would love to partner with a distributor to expand our reach even further, but since we cannot control any meaningful part of the relationship with a distributor, we won't pursue one.

I'm asking you all to support small local businesses like myself. Allow me to have normal contracts like I have with all of my other business partners and suppliers and giving me the chance to effectively expand our distribution radius and continue to spread our wings. Thank you.