



**House Agriculture Committee  
HB 96 – opposition testimony  
February 20, 2025**

Chairman Creech, Vice Chair Newman, Ranking Member Miller and all members of the House Agriculture Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Greater Ohio Showmen's Association (GOSA). My name is Eric German and I serve as GOSA's Executive Board Liaison & Communications Director. The GOSA is a non-profit organization made up of 450+ members in the outdoor amusement industry. Our members service all the county fairs in the state of Ohio as well as other festivals and community events. GOSA members are family owned & operated businesses and earn their living providing enjoyment to others.

Our members primarily operate in three business categories: food concessions, games, and amusement rides. Today, we are addressing concerns on behalf of our amusement ride members. All amusement rides in the state are permitted and inspected by the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Ride Safety Division, a critically important public protection process. Our ride company members value the safety of our customers and understand the necessity of the agency's inspection role.

However, a proposal is included in the operating budget to increase inspection fees for mechanical rides that will raise the cost of doing business for these Ohio family businesses. The proposed increase will cost the typical ride company 20% more in inspection fees in 2025. This comes on top of inspection fee increases our members absorbed in 2024.

Last year's increase, due to a provision allowing the Division to charge ride companies for supplemental inspections required under Tyler's Law, was significant but understandable. While not ideal for our members, we recognize that the Department cannot be expected to absorb the cost of the extra inspection and inspectors' time. However, these supplemental inspections amounted to a 40% increase in a ride company's annual inspection bills. The current proposed inspection fee increases will be magnified by these supplemental inspections, as companies will have to pay these higher fees twice. In total, the average ride company's annual inspection fees will have doubled between 2024 and 2026. Additionally, our members have seen increases in operating costs due to recent changes to ride safety laws, including the additional cost of contracting with professional engineers to certify and attest to repairs and maintenance for the inspectors.

The proposed increases on the family rides, major rides, spectacular rides, tower rides and large roller coasters, are intended to supplement a permit and inspection fee decreases for inflatable rides. This proposal is punitive to many of our members and only benefit one segment of the amusement industry over others.

We ask this committee to remove the proposed changes to permitting and inspection fees for mechanical rides from the budget. Thank you for your consideration of this perspective.