



*Working together for Ohio farmers to advance
agriculture and strengthen our communities.*

Agriculture Committee
HB 10 Proponent Testimony
Whittney Bowers, Director of State Policy and Grassroots Engagement

Chairman Creech, Vice Chair Newman, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, my name is Whittney Bowers, and I serve as the Director of State Policy and Grassroots Engagement at Ohio Farm Bureau. I appreciate the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 10, on behalf of Ohio Farm Bureau and our members.

As someone who personally raises livestock for direct consumer sales, I understand the importance of transparency and consumer trust in the products they purchase. When consumers inquire about buying beef from our farm, they ask important questions: Was the animal grass-fed or grain-fed? How was it raised and processed? What are the best cuts or packaging suggestions for the butcher? These questions reflect the growing interest and demand for information on food sourcing and production. People want to make informed choices when feeding themselves and their families, and as farmers, we are committed to meeting that demand by offering diverse options that reflect the preferences of today's consumers.

That's why proper labeling and clear communication are essential. Consumers have the right to know what they are purchasing, and accurate labeling ensures they can make informed decisions about their food. Diet preferences vary widely, and protein sources are no exception. Some consumers prioritize lean meat, others seek high marbling, and still, others are looking for plant-based alternatives. We need to be able to offer a broad range of options that meet these varied needs while ensuring consumers are informed about what they are buying, especially as we look toward the potential broad implementation of cell-cultured or lab-grown protein alternatives.

As we discuss better ways to inform consumers, it's important to note that House Bill 10 addresses the emerging area of cell-cultured and lab-grown meat in K-12 schools. Most students don't have a large variety of options each day; many pack their lunch, eat the lunch provided by the school, or choose an alternative option available to them by the cafeteria staff. As a parent myself, I have one child who packs her lunch almost every day, while the other simply eats whatever is provided in the cafeteria. Parents trust that



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the food prepared for their children in schools is safe, nutritious, and aligned with their needs.

This bill will help provide clarity and reassurance for parents, ensuring they understand what their children are eating while in the care of others. It will also allow school districts to proactively develop policies around the use of cell-cultured or lab-grown meats, facilitating community conversations and creating transparency about this new and emerging food source.

House Bill 10 will create important protections for both consumers and producers alike, ensuring that families have the information they need to make informed decisions, while allowing school districts to navigate this new space with clarity and confidence. Thank your Reps. Klopfenstein and Daniels for your work in this area. Chairman Creech, members of the Agriculture Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today and provide a perspective on behalf of Ohio Farm Bureau.