

Testimony of Eyad Moreb  
Opposing HB 160 / Supporting HB 198

Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Isaacsohn, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee, my name is Eyad Moreb, and I am the co-owner of Moreb Wholesale - a family-run business based here in Ohio. We proudly employ Ohio residents year-round, and we have made it a mission to offer flexible and meaningful employment to those who need it most: single mothers balancing childcare, college students working to afford tuition, and individuals who need a supportive workplace to grow and succeed.

Over the years, we've watched the business landscape in Ohio shift dramatically. The rise of national chain stores has made it harder for small businesses to survive. Many of our customers - mom-and-pop shops that have existed for generations - have struggled just to stay open.

When Ohio legalized the hemp industry in 2019, it brought hope. It gave small businesses like ours and our customers a chance to recover lost margins and keep their doors open. We believed in that opportunity - so much so that we invested over \$5 million in real estate and infrastructure to expand our operations. Today, we distribute hemp products not just in Ohio, but nationwide, creating hundreds of jobs and partnerships in the process.

But HB 160 threatens all of that.

Forcing hemp products into the marijuana dispensary system would mean mass layoffs, the collapse of our hemp business, and the loss of a vital economic lifeline for thousands of small stores across the state. It would drive these products to the black market and to unregulated online sellers from out of state - exactly what we're all trying to prevent.

We're not asking to be exempt from oversight - we're asking for fair regulation. HB 198 offers a path forward that protects both the public and small businesses. I submitted proponent testimony on HB 198 to this committee last week. With reasonable rules, we can continue investing in Ohio - in farms, labs, manufacturing, and our communities.

But if HB 160 passes, we'll be punishing businesses that did everything right and handing a growing, job-creating industry over to out-of-state interests.

At Moreb Wholesale, we've built something we're proud of - something that supports working families, invests in Ohio, and contributes to the community. Please don't take that away.

Reject HB 160. Support HB 198. Let's keep this industry safe, fair, and local.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eyad Moreb

Co-Owner, Moreb Wholesale