

Official Written Testimony

In support of House Bill 433- Amusement Ride Fee Restructuring

Date: March 1, 2026

Submitted to: Ohio Senate Subcommittee on Agriculture

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Chairman Schaffer and Senate Ag Committee members:

To prepare for my testimony today related to HB 433, I went back and reviewed the Ohio house testimony on this issue provided by Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Brian Baldrige and the in-depth review and history of this issue was explained very well. A bounce house, a “scrambler” mechanical amusement ride, the “wind seeker” ride at Cedar Point, and massive roller coaster amusements are all very different types of rides. The department created a committee of subject matter experts to study the inspection process, and from that, the fee structure we are here to discuss was developed.

The inflatable amusement ride industry for many years now has been concerned with the cost they feel has become a burden to them because it never fairly represented the actual cost of labor and administrative cost structure proportionally to the large type of amusements I just mentioned. The process is very different and takes less time to effectively inspect a small non-mechanical type unit versus the more complex and sometimes very large mechanical amusements, yet the fee was the same.

HB 433 simply took into consideration the actual cost to complete the process and revised the fee structure to reflect the actual cost for compliance and re assessed those fees. To accomplish this, a sub committee was formed and included representatives from all segments of the amusement industry here in Ohio. Through that work they unanimously approved a new fee structure that was fair to all parties and accurately assessed the work being done to each particular type of amusement ride. After being presented to the full amusement ride safety committee, it was also unanimously approved. It aligns time spent accurately with fees charged.

Although portions of the fee structure and program were previously modified through changes in legislation like “Tylers Law”, it is also safe to say this is really the first time the entire program has been evaluated and changes were recommended. It’s important to note that this preserves the safe operation of rides, maintains funding to the ride safety program,

and allows ride owners to simply pay their fair share for compliance. A bounce house may only take approximately 30 minutes for inspection, and a larger mechanical can take many hours and, in some cases, even days. For many years the smaller units were unfairly subsidizing the inspection process for larger rides.

By accurately assessing the cost the changes will support many inflatable amusement industry small businesses and allow them to be in compliance yet add units to there inventory so that different theme designs are available for birthday parties and seasonal events.

Respectfully,

Kevin Wieging

Inflatable Operators Association

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**Department of
Agriculture**

Advisory Council on Amusement Ride Safety

Amusement Ride Fees Discussion

Background & Legislative Directive



HB 238 – A bill focused on occupational licensing requirements included a provision that amended the permitting and inspection fees of inflatables in the state.

Members of the State and Local Government Committee, including Chairwoman Marilyn John, requested that ODA and the Advisory Council on Amusement Ride Safety examine the current fees for *all rides* to reflect the true cost of inspection to ODA. Members of the committee expressed concerns that the costs to inflatable operators were inequitable when compared to the length of inspection time.

The Advisory Council on Amusement Ride Safety established a subcommittee to examine this issue and propose new fees to the entire council at its next meeting.

Proposal



1. New Ride Categories
2. Adjust Inspection Fees to Reflect Average Inspection Time and Costs
3. Establish Volume Discounts for Inflatable Inspections



New Ride Categories



1. Inflatable
2. Kiddie
3. Family
4. Major
5. Spectacular
6. Family & Portable Coaster
7. Tower
8. Large Roller Coaster

Adjust Inspection Fees to Reflect Average Inspection Time and Costs

- ODA reviewed the average time required to inspect a generic ride in each of the new categories ODA focused on the following elements to establish the average time:
 - Drive-time
 - Ride Foundation
 - Ride Structure
 - Vehicle/Car
 - Operation
 - Paperwork
- The average salary including benefits of an ODA employee is \$50/hour.

Proposed Fee Formula:

Multiply:

1. Average Inspection Time
2. Number of Inspectors
3. ODA Average Salary

Example:

1. One-Hour
2. Two Inspectors
3. \$50

Total Cost: \$100

Current Framework



Ohio Revised Code 993.04 establishes both the permit fees and inspection fees for all amusement rides in the state of Ohio. The lone exception to this rule is the inspection fee for inflatables is set in Ohio Administrative Code. The current fee structure is as follows:

Category	Permit Fee	Inspection Fee
Kiddie	\$225	\$100
Inflatable	\$225	\$104
Other	\$225	\$160
Aerial Lifts	\$225	\$450
Roller Coaster	\$225	\$1200

Fee Proposal Summary



Based on the directive from the General Assembly, ODA established new ride categories and established new inspection fees based on the average cost of inspection. Those fees are summarized below:

Ride Category	Permit Fee	Inspection Fee	Total Initial Permitting Cost	Cost Difference
Inflatables	\$100	\$50 - \$100	\$150 - 200	-\$124 to -\$174
Kiddie	\$225	\$100	\$350	\$0
Family	\$225	\$200	\$425	\$40
Major	\$225	\$300	\$525	\$140
Spectacular	\$225	\$400	\$625	\$240
Family/Portable Coaster	\$225	\$1200	\$1445	\$0
Tower	\$225	\$1800	\$2025	\$1640
Large Coaster	\$225	\$4000	\$4225	\$2800

Inflatables



“Inflatable” style rides consist of large vinyl structures usually in the shape of a building, that are filled with air and that children can jump up and down on for fun.

On Site Inspection Time:  to 

Number of Inspectors: 

Current Cost: \$329



Establishing inflatable volume discounts.

Over the last several years ODA has received requests to provide volume discounts to inflatable operators to cut down on multiple inspection requests. Previously, ODA reviewed the costs of inflatable inspections and found that the way companies were requesting inspections dramatically increased costs. Nevertheless, at the request of both industry and the general assembly ODA has proposed the following inflatable volume discounts.

Proposed Inflatable Permit Fee

\$100

Inflatable Inspection Volume Pricing

Inflatables (1-3)	\$100/each
Inflatables (4-10)	\$75/each
Inflatables (11+)	\$50/each

Kiddie



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“Kiddie” type rides are sized and paced for younger children without the accompaniment of an adult. These rides tend to operate on a plane perpendicular to the ground but can include vertical movements and slight elevations such as smaller coasters and spring type rides.

Inspection Time:  

Inspectors: 

Proposed Inspection Cost: \$100

Current Cost: \$100



Family

“Family” type attractions are geared at teens as well as adults. Younger children may ride so long as they accompanied by an adult. These rides tend to be higher capacity. Also include patron activated attractions such as rockwalls.



Inspection Time:  

Inspectors:  

Proposed Inspection Cost: \$200

Current Cost: \$160

Family




“Family” type attractions are geared at teens as well as adults. Younger children may ride so long as they accompanied by an adult. These rides tend to be higher capacity. Also include patron activated attractions such as rockwalls.


Examples:

- Ballistics
- Bear Affair
- Berry-Go-Round
- Carousels & Merry-Go-Rounds
- Climbing/Rock Walls
- Euro Bungy
- Fun Houses & Walk Throughts
- Fun Slides
- Lazy Rivers & Wave Pools
- Ropes Courses
- Scrambler
- Simulators
- Tilt-A-Whirl
- Water Slides

Major

“Major” rides are geared towards teens and adults. Younger children are typically not able to ride these rides. These attractions operate in multiple axis at higher speeds and may elevate patrons.

Inspection Time: 

Inspectors: 

Proposed Inspection Cost: \$300

Current Cost: \$160



Major



“Major” rides are geared towards teens and adults. Younger children are typically not able to ride these rides. These attractions operate in multiple axis at higher speeds and may elevate patrons.

Examples:

- Casino/Trabant
- Cliff Hanger
- Eli Bridge Ferris Wheels (ex. Eagle 16)
- Go Karts
- Loop-O/Rock-O/Roll-O Plane
- Monster/Octopus
- Round Up
- Sizzler
- Yo-Yo
- Zero Gravity

Spectacular

“Spectacular” rides are exhilarating high-capacity attractions geared towards older teens and adults.

Inspection Time: 

Inspectors: 

Proposed Inspection Cost: \$400

Current Cost: \$160



Spectacular



“Spectacular” rides are exhilarating high-capacity attractions geared towards older teens and adults.

Examples:

- Ali Baba
- Freak Out
- Giant Wheel (ex. Mulligan)
- Himalaya/Flying Bobs
- Hurricane
- Orbiter
- Sea Ray
- Vertigo
- Wave Swinger
- Wipe Out
- Zipper

Family/Portable Roller Coaster



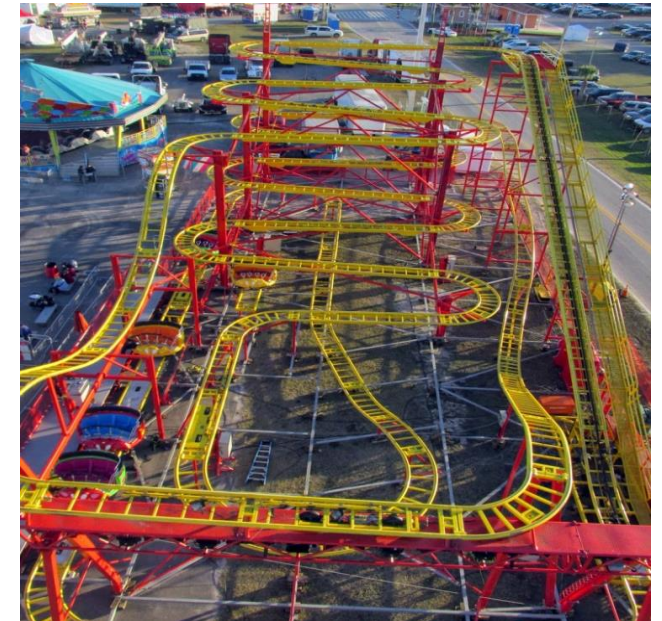
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Family/Portable roller coasters are geared towards family and children accompanied by a responsible person. Rides may be permanent or portable

Inspection Time: 

Inspectors: 

Current & Proposed Inspection Cost: \$1200



Family/Portable Coasters



Family/Portable roller coasters are geared towards family and children accompanied by a responsible person. Rides may be permanent or portable

Examples:

- Adventure Express
- Wild/Crazy Mouse
- Woodstock Express
- Portable Coasters (ie. Iron Dragon, Zyclon type)

Tower

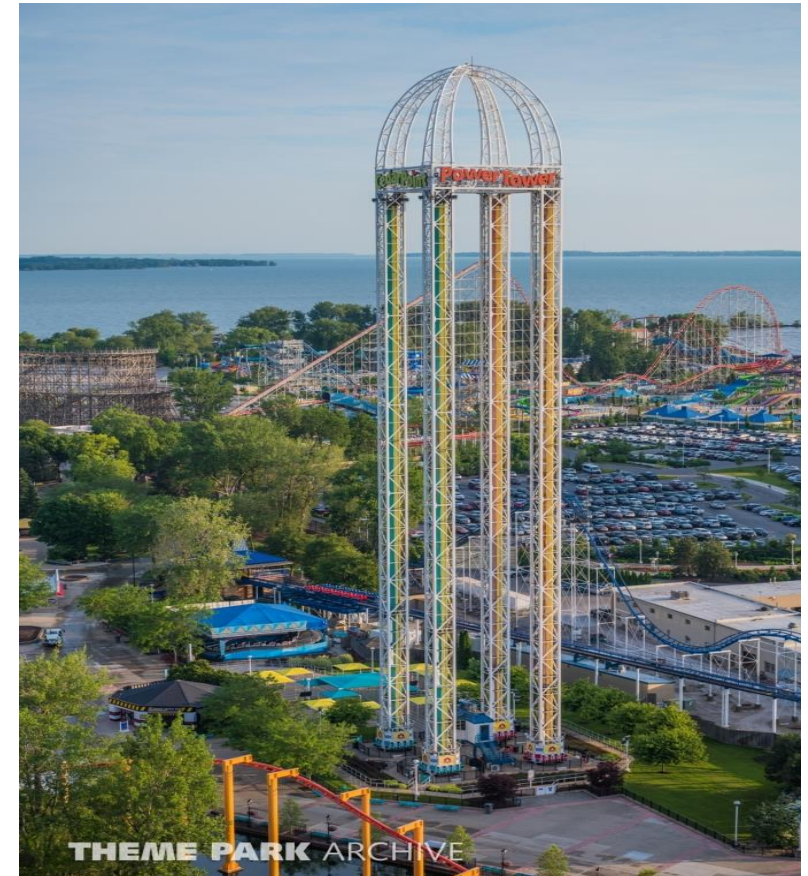
“Tower” rides are attractions that can operate at multiple speeds and axis and tend to operate at heights more than twenty feet. These rides usually require inspectors to utilize lifts and climbing equipment to inspect the ride.

Inspection Time: 

Inspectors:  or 

Current Cost: \$160

Proposed Inspection Cost: \$1800



Tower



“Tower” rides are attractions that can operate at multiple speeds and axis and tend to operate at heights more than twenty feet. These rides usually require inspectors to utilize lifts and climbing equipment to inspect the ride.

Examples:

- Delirium
- Drop Zone
- Eiffel Tower
- Max Air
- Sky Coasters
- Skyride/SkyGlider
- Soaring Eagle
- Space Shot
- Power Tower
- Wind Seeker

Large Roller Coaster

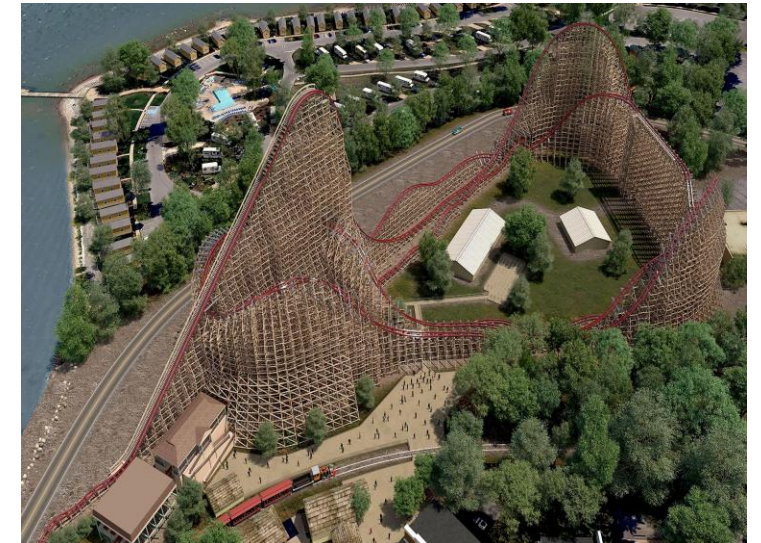


Large roller coasters usually consist of an elevated railway constructed with sharp curves and steep inclines on which cars roll, flip, and have steep descents.

Inspection Time: 

Inspectors: 

Current Inspection Cost: \$1200 Proposed Inspection Cost: \$4000



Large Coasters



Large roller coasters usually consist of an elevated railway constructed with sharp curves and steep inclines on which cars roll, flip, and have steep descents.

Examples:

- Banshee
- The Beast
- Diamondback
- Gate Keeper
- Gemini
- Magnum XL 200
- Millenium Force
- Mystic Timbers
- Orion
- Racer
- Raptor
- Rougarou
- Steel Vengeance
- Maverick
- Top Thrill 2
- Valravn

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Questions?

