

Hello, my name is Stephen Kaumeyer, I work for SuperGames located here in Columbus, Ohio. We currently have 65 inflatables and 8 intermediate rides licensed through the state of Ohio. I've worked with SuperGames for the last 23 years and attended nearly all ride safety meetings over the past 10 years, thus allowing me to see firsthand the evolution of the Ride Safety Department and associated fees that come with the inspection process. I would first like to commend the current Ohio Ride Safety Divisions leadership and inspectors; they are truly leaders in the industry and run one of if the best Ride Safety Departments in the nation. So how did we get to where we are today. 10 years ago, when I started attending meetings what we noticed was a ride advisory board with many sitting members with expired term limits, and no representation for the inflatable industry. We also noticed other inflatable companies attending the meetings with the same glaring question as us. Why are we paying thousands of dollars for inspections that take merely hours for the inspectors to compete. We then started looking at how much larger ride companies paid for inspections of their rides that take multiple inspector's multiple days to inspect. The data was extremely obvious. While the larger rides did cost more to inspect, in no way did it offset the amount of time and manpower it takes to complete an inspection. Moreover, we found it frustrating that inflatable inspection funded over 50% of the Ride Safety department without zero representation on the Ride Advisory Board. At this time a select few inflatable companies started working together under the Ohio Inflation Operators Association try to gain that representation that was missing. IN 2017 HB 49 an amendment to the states operating budget eliminated the 105-dollar inspection fee and authorized the Ride Safety director to determine the new fee structure but it had to be under the current 105-dollar fee. I can remember walking into Kasich Hall at the Fairground excited to finally see a deduction in inflatable fees. When I witnessed the director at the time take 2 second to announce a dollar drop in the inspection fees to 104 dollars I felt as if the system had failed us. As we were walking out feeling upset the director stopped me and asked me "You want to punch me in my face don't you". As I told him then and as I tell you now, this issue isn't going away. Whether you deal with it now and make it right or if you don't, it's not going away. In 2018 HB 189 was passed appointing 2 individuals form the inflatable industry to the Advisory board.

This process has been a long and frustrating one that continually seems to think of inflatable owners as lesser, while asking them to provide over 50% of the Departments income. The new proposed fee structure is simply a time-based fee that charges based on the average cost the ODA incurs per type of ride.

Today as a constituent and a member of the **inflation amusement industry** in Ohio I respectfully request your consideration and support for legislation that would **lower the financial and regulatory burden** imposed on our businesses through state permit and inspection fees.

The inflatable amusement sector, which includes bounce houses, slides, obstacle courses, and similar rental equipment, makes up a significant portion of Ohio's small business landscape in the entertainment and event services industry. These companies—often small, family-owned operations—provide affordable, family-friendly

fun and are vital contributors to local economies across the state, particularly during the warm-weather season.

While we fully support and prioritize **public safety** through rigorous inspections and regulation by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), the current structure of state-mandated fees places a disproportionate and substantial financial strain on these small businesses.

Specifically, the combination of **annual permit fees** and **per-ride inspection/reinspection fees** accumulates quickly for owners with multiple pieces of equipment. Given the high volume of inflatable units many companies own, these fees can represent a considerable percentage of a small business's annual operating costs, ultimately limiting their ability to invest in new, safer equipment and hire staff.

We believe that a review of the fee structure, similar to proposals that have sought to reduce the flat annual permit fee for an inflatable ride and adjust the inspection/reinspection fee based on the number of rides inspected at the same time and location, would provide much-needed relief without compromising safety. Such an adjustment would:

- **Support Small Business Growth:** Free up capital for owners to expand their inventory and invest in operational improvements.
- **Encourage Compliance:** Reduce the temptation for smaller operators to skip permitting or necessary maintenance due to prohibitive costs.
- **Acknowledge Business Scale:** Better reflect the economic reality and lower operational complexity of inflatable rentals compared to major amusement park rides.

I urge you to consider championing legislation or working with your colleagues to reduce these high fees. Your support would directly benefit numerous small business owners and families who rely on this industry throughout Ohio.