



*Coastalo*



Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, my name is Scotty Hunter and I am the Co-owner of the brewery Urban Artifact. Thank you for the opportunity to address our organization's opposition to Senate Bill 86 today.

Urban Artifact is a craft brewery based in Cincinnati that produces world class fruit beer, hemp beverages under the Coastalo brand name and co-manufacturers for a dozen other beverage brands. We distribute our beer brand to over twenty states and our hemp brand is distributed to a dozen states in less than a years' time. We are committed to producing safe, highly quality beverages that are compliant with necessary rules and regulations.

Our company began producing hemp beverages in the fall of 2023 after acquiring our processors' license from the department of agriculture. The ability for our business to produce these beverages safely and at a high quality has been nothing short of a boon for our business. We have seen our manufacturing and warehousing jobs grow by 25% to date and we expect to add another 30% to our workforce in the next 4-6 months. Much of this business growth has come thanks to the ability to manufacture hemp beverages.

We seek your support to continue to allow hemp products to be sold here in Ohio as they have been now for years in businesses large and small throughout the state. Consumer demand continues to grow, and new products are entering the market as other producers in state acquire the proper licenses.

The restrictions imposed by SB 86 would hamper the ability of Ohio producers to compete in the greater market, impose uncertainty for manufacturers producing for out of state brands and limit the ability of bars and restaurants to serve these beverages on draft which is the most economical format for these operators.

We want to continue to invest in our manufacturing operations here in Ohio and see other craft brewers have the ability to diversify their businesses and better utilize their assets to keep more manufacturing jobs in state. If SB 86 passes as written, it would severely threaten our ability to compete with our hemp beverage brand across the country as well as raise immediate concern as to our ability to manufacture beverages for other brands that may be above the proposed THC limits.

Sincerely,

Scotty Hunter