



**Senate Bill 86
Opponent Testimony
Senate General Government Committee
March 25, 2025**

Chair Roegner, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 86, legislation that seeks to ban intoxicating hemp products.

As President of the Ohio Grocers Association, I proudly represent over 300 food retail, wholesale and supply companies across the Buckeye state. My members include the smallest "mom and pop" stores, independent grocers as well as some convenience stores and of course the food wholesalers who supply these stores.

We share the Senate's concerns on making sure intoxicating products are kept out of the hands of our children. Our members have extensive experience and take the responsibility of selling a wide range of adult products to consumers on a daily basis. There are rigid protocols and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that any adult use product is only sold to an age-appropriate consumer. We appreciate language within SB86 that would allow certain types of hemp beverages to continue to be sold at retail locations. However, we have concerns that the language in SB86 would ban most of all other types of hemp products from retail sales and driving them to an unsafe, illicit environment with no age restrictions.

We instead urge the Senate and welcome an approach that addresses youth access by incorporating strict regulatory oversight. These include components such as age-restricting products; product labeling and rigid testing procedures; and other regulatory requirements. We believe this is the best approach to not harm legitimate Ohio businesses, like grocery stores, while maintaining proper limitations and safety measures. We understand that there is House legislation that will be introduced soon, perhaps even later this week, that incorporates these regulatory principles mentioned above.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature on this legislation moving forward. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

