



The Ohio Fair Managers Association

PO Box 2625

Stow, OH 44224

(330) 208-0372 Phone & Fax

ohiofairs@att.net

www.ohiofairs.org

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Coley, Ranking Member Skindell, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify to today regarding House Bill 64. My name is Darrel Cubbison and I am testifying on behalf of the Ohio Fair Managers Association, which I proudly serve as President.

The Ohio Fair Manager's Association (OFMA) represents the 94 county and independent agricultural societies throughout the great state of Ohio. We are proud of the work we do to ensure that the traditions of the fairs continue for generations to come. The value that comes from Ohio's county and independent fairs is far more than what can be listed. Everything that our societies do, we do to promote the great industry of agriculture, the State's largest industry.

On behalf of the OFMA, I am here to testify on the Substitute House Bill 64. In the House passed version of HB 64 an appropriation was added to help support the operations of county agricultural societies. The substitute bill adopted yesterday removed that appropriation. I ask that you consider re-instating the funding when you adopt your omnibus amendment.

I'd venture to guess that the lion share of this committee has attended a county fair. You've probably even brought your families to enjoy your local fair. You've learned about agriculture, admired the projects that Ohio's youth work hard to present, enjoyed the rides, and ate food that probably ruined your diet.

While county agriculture societies do an excellent job putting on 1st class fairs for their communities, most fairgrounds are in great need of investment. Building and grounds maintenance are very expensive, and fairs operate on very thin margins. "Surplus" is not a word you hear often from Fair Boards.

These important community events happen because of the hard work of volunteers. These dedicated folks give up their time to pull off an event that everyone can be proud of. As you can imagine, we do the best we can with the limited resources we have. However, economic realities have not allowed many fairs to make the type of investment in their grounds that are so sorely need.

Support from the state will go a long way and be very appreciated by the OFMA, our members and your constituents. I hope that Ohio's agricultural societies remain a part of what makes Ohio so great. And I hope that this committee considers making a much need investment in our future. Thank you for your time.