



April 21, 2015

Dear Chairman LaRose, Vice-Chairman Hottinger, Ranking Member Thomas and Members of the Senate State and Local Government Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Substitute House Bill 47.

My name is Jack Heekin. I am the owner and founder of the Cincinnati and Columbus Pedal Wagon Companies. This bill will provide local governments a valuable tool to promote tourism and small businesses like mine.

A Pedal Wagon is 15-passenger commercial quadricycle, completely controlled and operated by a driver and powered by stationary passengers equipped with cycle pedals. Much like the spirit of this legislation, our goal is to connect Ohioans and visitors with the small businesses that make our communities unique. We operate by entering into partnerships with the restaurants and bars at which our quadricycles stop. We are not a “cab-for-hire” and patrons do not dictate the direction of the tour or locations they visit. We work closely with our hospitality partners to maintain relationships that mutually benefit our local businesses and ensure the safety of our patrons. All Pedal Wagon passengers sign a liability waiver in which they must acknowledge that inappropriate behaviors will result in being asked to un-board the quadricycle.

The largest hurdle our small business faces is the fact that our passengers are not permitted to have an open container while onboard. Last year we worked with the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) to address the problem and CSI facilitated the crafting of language to allow for a beer and wine open container exemption for commercial quadricycles. We worked with the sponsors and members of the House committee to include this language in H.B. 47 and craft additional tweaks to ensure the policy is implemented in a safe and responsible manner that provides for local oversight. The same language was also included in the substitute version of S.B. 95 that was reported by your committee last week.

This tweak to Ohio law will put the appropriate regulations in place to help our small business grow locally and enhance our commercial partnerships. We operate in a responsible, safe manner because it is in the best interest of our business, our partners and our clients. By working together, I am confident we can implement this common-sense policy responsibly.

I hope you will support the passage of Substitute House Bill 47.

Sincerely,

Jack Heekin

Owner/Founder

The Cincinnati Pedal Wagon & Columbus Pedal Wagon