

Dear Members of The Government Oversight and Reform Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this afternoon. My name is Nate DeMars and I am the owner of Pursuit, a local retailer based in the Short North Arts District of Columbus. My business launched out of a class project at the Fisher College of Business at The Ohio State University in 2011 and has more than tripled in revenue over the past three years, in part because of our strong connections to the Ohio community.

One major initiative that has fueled our growth has been a partnership to be the “Official Matchday Suit Partner of Columbus Crew SC”; a partnership launched late in 2017 with great results. We were drawn to the partnership because we saw the deep roots of the Crew SC fan base across Ohio and because we believe that the sport of soccer will become increasingly important as new generations of sports fans choose where to spend their time, money and even when they choose the places they want to live. In short, we made our largest marketing investment ever in our partnership with Crew SC because we believe in the importance of this organization to our community and our customers.

We are building a business based here in Ohio that we believe will be national in scale. We believe building here in Columbus will allow Pursuit to benefit from the substantial growth in our region and Columbus’ emergence on a national stage. We believe Columbus Crew SC and its fan base are important pieces to Columbus’ emergence on that national stage.

Columbus and Ohio have been pioneers in American soccer and have drawn the attention of the world on numerous occasions, solidifying Columbus as a forward thinking city on the rise and changing perceptions of the state of Ohio. Losing Crew SC would be a large step backwards for a city, region, and state with such lofty forward ambitions.

For those reasons, we ask that you support efforts to keep Columbus Crew SC here in Ohio. Thank you for your time. #SaveTheCrew