

Hello my name is Michael Cameron,

I would like to thank Chair Hillyer, Vice-Chair Grendell and Ranking Member Galonski and the House Civil Justice Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide a proponent testimony for House Bill 63

My wife Barbara and I own and operate 153 acre farm in Green Twp. Mahoning County.

Our property will be bisected by the proposed bike trail. That trail will limit the access to property to the east; it is used for pasture for our cattle and farm ground. We raise beef cattle and grain farm. We grow corn, soybeans and hay. The cows have free range access from our barn to pasture to a water way. This water way keeps them cool in the summer. Our open range policy is a big part of our operation.

Our farm is located on a dead end road. We cannot see another house or neighbor. Our privacy has always been important to us. Our children could run around, take a walk by the creek without any problems or worry. Now our grandchildren enjoy the same. This will all change. Our house and barn sit about 300 ft. from where this trail is proposed. The operation of our business and our live will be changed forever. All for a hobby we do not enjoy.

This trail has been ongoing for many years. When mill creek talks about this bike trail they call it an "abandon railroad" this property has never been abandon and it is not a railroad. We have seen many people come and go, such as surveyors, geologists and many more without any notice. Their idea of notice is a form letter sent out every couple of months letting us know someone will be there at some time. According to Ohio revised code 5517.01 and 163.03. This gives them the right to come and go on my property with nothing we could do witch puts us at liability. We have contacted the park to let us know when people maybe there. I would move cattle or shut in barn. Large animals can be dangerous if spooked or scared. The park did nothing in response.

Several years ago at the request of our attorney, we met with the head of Mill Creek Park. They were in the planning phase. We offered to give them the land along Washingtonville Rd because most bike trails are along or beside a road. This is what the bikes use now and has for many years without incident. The park flat out denied our offer saying that would make it a bikeway; they want a bike trail.

We asked them that we need fencing to keep people away from my cattle and my cattle away from the trail. They agreed to the request 3 right of ways to cross with cattle equipment the main right away closest to barn requested a bridge 20 x20 to move cattle and equipment without interruption of trail. We also talked about a tunnel in this location they seem as if agreement. When mill creek parks proposal came it had none of these. The fencing was in the proposal but no mention of what type we rejected offer.

November 30 2018 they sued us for eminent domain. How do you successfully negotiate with someone who has eminent domain in their pocket? They try to intimidate and bully because they can. This is wrong! As of right now, they have given me one 12 foot right of way to cross track. Also, if damage happens to trail I am responsible for repairs. I cannot get equipment threw a 12 foot gate.

In closing eminent domain for the use of recreation is ridiculous and laws need changed. This is not just my problem this is happening all across Ohio. The state of Ohio should get ahead of this problem by adopting House Bill Number 63, allowing local communities a say in whether to take purpose doing so we ensure that private property remains forever inviolate in Ohio.

Thank you.