



**Ohio House of Representatives
Ways and Means Committee
H.B. 165 Proponent Testimony
Tadd Nicholson, Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
March 23, 2021**

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Riedel, Ranking Member Sobacki, and members of the committee, I'm here today on behalf of the Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association (OCWGA). Our association represents the interests of more than 30,000 Ohio grain producers, and on their behalf, I am grateful for the opportunity to present testimony in support of House Bill 165.

I'm Tadd Nicholson and I serve as Executive Director of the Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association. Our association serves as the voice of our membership in policy matters at both the state and federal levels.

Each year, our grower members have the opportunity to market their corn to Ohio's seven ethanol plants which have capacity to produce more than 675 million gallons of fuel grade ethanol annually. Since its inception in 2007, the market kick-started by the federal Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) has contributed to the stability of local grain markets – adding about \$1.27 per bushel in value to each bushel grown by our members.

But ethanol means much more to our members personally than positive numbers on a balance sheet. As custodians of the environment, Ohio's grain producers remain deeply concerned for the ecosystems they maintain, and their children will inherit. Ohio's grain farmers are committed to clean air, clean water and healthy soils. Ethanol has played a critical role in improving air quality across the nation. Because of the RFS, ethanol blended products have contributed to a 40 million metric ton per year decrease in carbon emissions – the equivalent of removing more than 8 million cars from our roads every year. The most recent scientific studies show that ethanol offers a 46% reduction in harmful emissions compared to traditional petroleum fuels. By encouraging higher blends of ethanol at the pump, we will promote an even healthier future for our children.

Lastly, I'd like to speak to you as a consumer in central Ohio. Currently, I have no access to E-15, also known as Unleaded 88 gasoline. The bill you are considering today directly addresses this need by incentivizing retailers to make long-term investments in the infrastructure of their facilities. I firmly believe that when an average consumer sees the savings per gallon afforded by Unleaded 88, typically five to ten cents per gallon, they will opt in and help us reach cleaner emissions goals through their own economic decisions.

In summary, higher blends of ethanol offer further carbon emission reduction benefits, cleaner air, savings to consumers, and critical market stability to Ohio's grain producers and the broader rural economy. I urge you to support Ohio's farmers, our environment and everyday consumers by supporting this important legislation.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 165. I'd be happy to answer any question you may have.