



March 23, 2021

Dear Chair Tim Schaffer and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee,

My name is John Moorhead; I am the Competition Manager and Lead Liaison of Government Affairs of the American Homebrewers Association (AHA), based in Boulder, CO.

The AHA is a division of the Brewers Association, a not-for-profit trade association representing America's small, independent brewers, including homebrewers. The AHA is a membership organization with 40,000 members from around the country, including over 1,100 members in Ohio. The AHA estimates that there are nearly 1,100,000 Americans that make beer or wine at home, thousands of whom live in Ohio.

Senate Bill 102 is a reasonable and fair piece of legislation. The Ohio Department of Liquor control (ODL) currently adopts federal statute on homebrewing passed in 1979 but restricts the transportation and serving of homemade beer based on current alcohol codes for licensed alcohol.

Senate Bill 102 would allow events like beer competitions, homebrew club meetings, educational classes and seminars, and conferences to occur. These would all have a positive economic impact on the local and state economies. Currently, Ohio's Liquor Law does not include a provision on homemade beer, leaving uncertainty and ambiguity around manufacturing, transporting, and serving homebrew. This creates inconsistencies in enforcement of homebrew across the state.

Passing SB 102 would allow the AHA to bring their annual conference to Ohio. The event brings in 3,000 people and the conference is only open to our membership. The conference brings in millions of dollars in overall realized tax revenue to the host city's local economy. A recent conference held in Minneapolis, MN, brought in an estimated 3.98 million in economic impact and an estimated \$186,000 in state tax and \$100,000 in local tax revenues. SB 102 will open Ohio to future conferences and remove any possible obstructions to other similar events.

Many homebrewers are members of local clubs that lean on their local breweries for support, as do the local breweries on homebrewers. SB 102 would make sure that local craft and large breweries as well as any facility licensed to manufacture and/or sell alcoholic beverages be protected in regard to homebrew on their premises, which includes storage for an event like a competition, educational classes and other events not open to the public but not require the business to suspend normal operations to host such an event.

There is concern that passage of SB 102 would create a system of unlicensed sales on licensed premises. Over my tenure at the AHA, particularly in government affairs, and my 12 years of homebrewing, I have not seen or heard of such an instance of homebrewers illegally selling product. Homebrewers want to share their hobby with others safely and lawfully. SB 102 would create a clear framework to allow them to do so.

The homebrewing community also serves to train the state's future professional brewers. The Brewers Association estimates that at least 90% of professional brewers in the United States got their start as homebrewers. Homebrewers are also opening the majority of the small craft breweries being founded in the United States. As of now there are at least 150 small breweries in operation in Ohio with more in planning. With the passage of SB 102, there will continue to be a healthy pipeline of entrepreneurs to open small businesses in their communities.

Because the professional and amateur brewing communities are so tightly knit, homebrewers serve as the strongest supporters of their local breweries. They not only seek out locally made craft beers at their favorite establishments, but also encourage their friends and families to support local breweries and retailers that sell locally made beer.

Thus, a vibrant homebrewing community will help Ohio small businesses flourish. Stifling the community of homebrewers by not passing SB 102 would prevent the state from seeing the kind of growth in homebrew retailer businesses and small breweries that the rest of the country experiences.

Several neighboring states have already adopted reasonable homebrew legislation and have seen great benefits from passing such legislation. Three that are near Ohio are Indian, Illinois and Wisconsin, all thriving beer communities.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to pass SB 102, not only is it the right thing to do for Ohio's homebrewers, but passage of SB 102 will prove beneficial to Ohio's business community as well.

Sincerely,

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