

70th House District
Ashland County, Holmes County,
Medina County

Columbus Office
Vern Riffe Center
77 S. High Street
11th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111
(614) 466-2994
(614) 719-6997 (Fax)
Rep70@ohiohouse.gov
www.ohiohouse.gov



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Sponsor Testimony on House Bill 321
February 8, 2022

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor and members of the Senate serving on the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for allowing us to come before you today and present sponsor testimony on House Bill 321.

The current process to become a licensed auctioneer in Ohio is outdated and creates unnecessary barriers to entry. Previously known as House Bill 373 in the 133rd General Assembly, HB 321 is legislation that will make necessary updates to the license process and modernize other antiquated areas within Ohio's auctioneer law.

The need for this legislation was brought to our attention by the Ohio Auctioneers Association. They, along with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, have been deeply involved throughout the bill process. Their support and suggestions have proven invaluable in helping to make this the best bill possible.

Some of the areas of change in this bill include the revising of apprenticeship requirements, the establishment of continuing education requirements and refining the definitions of both online and absolute auctions.

Currently, aspiring auctioneers must undergo an apprenticeship program to be licensed in Ohio which consists of hours of live auction experience and a final examination. On paper, this may not seem like much of a challenge but for many auctioneers it is simply not attainable. HB 321 will do away with the outdated apprenticeship requirements and replace it with an approved course of study at an auction school. This creates a set curriculum as the standard and all new auctioneers will have the same central foundation when attaining license in Ohio.

While removing barriers to entry is vital, there is also a need to protect the standard of excellence in the profession, therefore, the continuing education requirement in this bill will require auctioneers to complete eight hours of continuing education every two years coinciding with the auctioneer's license renewal.

As stated earlier, this legislation will also add new definitions to ORC section 4707.01, pertaining to auction/auctioneers' law in order to distinguish live auctions, online auctions, and license requirements.

We want to thank past Immediate President and Advocacy Committee Chair Wade Baer for his diligent work on this legislation to create an updated process for aspiring auctioneers and refine the language of the new definitions and requirements.

It is our belief that HB 321 is a simple bill that provides long-overdue updates to the auctioneer licensing process and in keeping with the spirit of SB255 (132GA) diminishes the existing barriers of entry to those interested in pursuing a career as an auctioneer while also insuring the current level of excellence and integrity will continue in the future in the great state of Ohio.

Once again, Chairman Schaffer and members of the Senate serving on the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on behalf of HB 321. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.