



Representative Dave Dobos

10th House District

Chairman Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, thank you for allowing my joint sponsor, Representative Klopfenstein, and me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 364.

As Representative Klopfenstein stated, this bill would assist in the augmentation of the milkweed plant, and, in turn, the growth of the monarch butterfly population, by exempting milkweed seeds from the current laws regarding noncommercial seed sharing.

While the restoration of the monarch butterfly population was the primary motive behind this bill, it covers a much broader range of seeds than just milkweed. This bill exempts any noncommercial seed sharing for the purpose of conserving plants that are necessary to the sustainment and growth of threatened or endangered species. It also exempts noncommercial seed sharing for the purpose of conserving or creating native plants.

The idea for this bill was brought to us by one of my constituents, David Donofrio, a former member of the South-Western City Schools Board of Education. He currently serves as the Vice President of the Ohio Prairie Association, a non-profit volunteer organization that promotes the conservation of Ohio's prairies. Some of the organization's members have wanted to share seeds of milkweed plants to promote the growth of the monarch butterfly population here in Ohio. Unfortunately, an unintended consequence of current state law is the prohibition

of all seed sharing for these and selected other plants, including that for *noncommercial* purposes. This bill would remedy this issue.

Throughout the bill drafting process we were in contact with Mr. Donofrio and officials with the Ohio Department of Agriculture to ensure that this bill addresses all parties' concerns and will be as beneficial as possible for those whom it may affect. The bill was submitted only after both organizations approved the final language.

Chairman Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture Committee, I humbly ask for your support of this legislation, which is crucial to the sustainment of plants and wildlife native to our great state. Thank you again for your time today.