

Ohio House of Representatives



May 28, 2020

Governor Mike DeWine
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine,

As you know, the beginning of summer marks county fair season in Ohio. County fairs are a staple in our rural districts and small towns. These special events showcase Ohio's proud agricultural industry and strengthen our sense of community. County fairs present an opportunity for youth involved in organizations like 4-H and FFA to display their projects that have grown their leadership skills and granted them responsibility through months of hard work and dedication. For these reasons and more, county fairs are a necessity to our rural communities.

Each county has faced different experiences and challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this, it is clear that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Therefore, we strongly urge you to comply with the recommendations offered by the Fair Advisory Group, chaired by Darke County's own and former State Representative Jim Buchy.

We believe these recommendations advance local control, while ensuring the health and safety of all Ohioans. It is time we trust Ohioans to make decisions in the best interest of their own communities. We all share the same goal of protecting one another and keeping each other safe. We are confident in the ability of our county fair boards, vendors, and patrons to implement and follow protocols that ensure a successful event.

Nick Shellenberger, Miami County Ag Society President and Fair Manager states, "The Miami County Fair is not only the exhibition of the work and accomplishments of our county and youth, but the annual renewal of relationships and renewal of purpose. The social gathering of the like-minded youth to share their experiences and information acquired throughout the year is of great importance to their development, education and mental health."

Brian Rismiller, Darke County Fair Manager urges, "I strongly feel with the proper guidance from your office our local health department as well as the Fairboard for Darke County can move forward with our fair and make it safe. I am preparing for an informational APP that will allow fairgoers to order from their favorite food stand while not having to wait in lines to get their food. Give us the chance to keep putting smiles on faces."

We are honored to represent districts that include strong and vibrant agricultural communities. As state representatives who hear from our districts, we understand that there are many issues facing our communities. Ensuring fairs move forward is one of them. Fairs not only help the youth of our community through 4-H and FFA, but fairs also form the backbone of the livelihood of many businesses who are dependent upon the county fair. Fairs are an asset to our community as a whole, and we firmly believe our county fairs can move forward as full fairs. We request the Governor allow local control as the Fair Advisory Group has recommended.

Thank you for your consideration,

Handwritten signature of Susan Manchester in black ink.

Susan Manchester
State Representative
Ohio House District 84

Handwritten signature of Jena Powell in black ink.

Jena Powell
State Representative
Ohio House District 80