



May 18, 2016

The Honorable Kevin Bacon
Chairman, Civil Justice Committee
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Bacon:

The Ohio Grocers Association proudly represents nearly 400 food retailers, wholesalers and suppliers across the state. Our members range from the largest chain stores to the smallest "mom and pop" independent grocers as well as the wholesalers who supply these stores. I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 268, legislation that helps to harmonize Ohio's employment discrimination statutes with their federal counterparts. These changes will increase efficiency, allow for easier compliance, and provide fair resolution of alleged incidents of discrimination for both employers and employees.

SB 268 increases efficiency by preventing employers from simultaneously having to defend claims in both the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and civil court. Employees still have the option and ability to pursue claims in both venues, however they cannot do so at the same time. SB 268 also creates a reasonable one-year statute of limitations. Ohio's current six-year statute of limitations is the longest in the country. This change allows for timely and fair resolution of claims of discrimination. Lastly, SB 268 enacts reasonable caps on non-economic and punitive damages. These caps mirror federal law and do not affect an employee's ability to receive traditional economic damages.

This legislation provides reasonable changes to the employment discrimination statutes that will improve Ohio's legal climate and allow for timely, fair and efficient resolution of claims. Accordingly, the Ohio Grocers Association urges the Civil Justice Committee to favorably recommend SB 268.

Sincerely,

Joe Ewig
Director of Government Relations & Communications
Ohio Grocers Association

cc: The Honorable Keith Faber, Senate President
The Honorable Bill Seitz, Sponsor of SB 268
Senate Civil Justice Committee Members