

STATE OF OHIO
Executive Department

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Columbus

VETO MESSAGE

**STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE VETO OF
AMENDED SENATE BILL 375**

January 11, 2021

Pursuant to Article II, Section 16, of the Ohio Constitution, which states that the Governor may disapprove of any bill, I hereby disapprove of Amended Senate Bill 375 “To void the Director of Health’s order regarding county fairs and create the Agricultural Society Working Group for 2021” and set forth the following reasons for so doing, as it is not in the best interest of protecting the health and safety of all Ohioans.

On July 28, 2020, I announced the difficult decision to limit all fairs to junior fair events and the Order took effect on July 31, 2020. The issuance of the Order was necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while preserving the essence of our fairs --- the many projects that our youth participate in at the fair.

During the 2020 fair season, many county and independent fairs stepped up to the plate. Coordinating with their local health departments, they worked hard to ensure social distancing requirements and mask wearing. However, as I stated in July, the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges related to it necessitated the Order to limit fairs to junior fair related activities.

My administration and the Legislature worked together during the 2020 fair season to provide some financial relief to the 94 agricultural societies. On June 9, 2020, the Lieutenant Governor and I, along with the Senate President and Speaker of the House, announced the issuance of \$4.7 million to local fairs with \$50,000 for each fair conducting a junior fair in the 2020 season. Additionally, fairs that chose not to operate a junior fair received \$15,000 that can be utilized for the 2021 season. The issuance of the funds was approved by the Controlling Board on June 15, 2020.

Further, in April of 2020, I announced that the Ohio Department of Agriculture had waived the \$50,000 local match requirement for the Agricultural Society Facilities Grant Program (which allows for fairground improvements at their facilities). This decision ensured continued state funding while recognizing the financial hardships to our agricultural societies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the 2021 fair season is set to begin in June, my administration will continue to consult with health professionals on the state and local level. It is imperative that such fairs be conducted in a safe manner that reflect the facts on the ground at the time.

Amended Senate Bill 375 voids the Director of Health's Order that took effect on July 31, 2020. Any modifications to this Order or potential rescinding of this Order must be made in consultation with such health professionals.

As these discussions occur, it is also essential to consult with the General Assembly and the local fair boards throughout Ohio. I look forward to their invaluable input as we anticipate the 2021 fair season. However, a blanket rescission of the current Order does not achieve the goal of working together to properly plan the upcoming fair season while ensuring the public health and protection of the people of Ohio. Therefore, it is reasonable and necessary for the current Order to remain in effect while these collaborative efforts occur.

For these reasons, this veto is in the public interest.



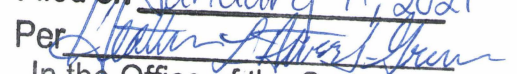
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of the State of Ohio to be affixed at Cedarville this 11th day of January, Two Thousand Twenty-One.


Mike DeWine, Governor

This will acknowledge the receipt of a copy of this veto message of Amended Senate Bill 375 that was disapproved by Governor Mike DeWine on January 11th, 2021.

NICK EIPPERT ASST. CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL
Name and Title of Officer

JANUARY 11, 2021 4:25 PM
Date and Time of Receipt

Filed on January 11, 2021
Per 
In the Office of the Secretary
of State at Columbus, OH
FRANK LaROSE
Secretary of State