



Department of
Agriculture

John R. Kasich | Governor

David T. Daniels | Director

**Sunset Review Committee
Testimony on Ohio Grape Industries Committee
Deputy Director Janelle Mead
November 16, 2015**

Member of the Sunset Review Committee, my name is Janelle Mead. I am a Deputy Director at the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony on behalf of the Ohio Grape Industries Committee. The Ohio Department of Agriculture is respectfully asking for re-authorization of the Ohio Grape Industries Committee.

The Ohio Grape Industries Committee (OGIC) was established by the General Assembly in 1981 to promote Ohio's grape and wine industry. The committee is a non-regulatory advisory board mandated to create viable, income-producing grape enterprises in the state of Ohio. It accomplishes this mandate by providing marketing and promotion efforts to generate and expand markets for grapes and grape products and by contracting for research to improve both the quality of grape products and the profitability of grape growing as an agri-business. There are currently 2,000 acres of vineyards and 233 licensed wine manufacturers in the state, which is more than a fifty percent increase in the last five years.

Funding for the Ohio Grape Industries Committee is established in ORC 4301.43 (B), ORC 4301.43(D), and ORC 4301.432 with a portion the tax collected on all wine sold in the state of Ohio. Currently the Ohio Grape Industries receives 5-cents per gallon on the sale of wines. Annual revenue is approximately \$1.1 million. OGIC's spending authority is nearly 1 million dollars for during each fiscal year for the biennium (AGR Fund 4960, Line item 700626)

The Ohio Grape Industries Committee is comprised of 9 members, five of which are appointed by the Director of Agriculture. The Ohio Grape Industries Committee operates to provide Ohio's grape and wine industry with marketing and research programs that will help to increase production and sales of Ohio grape and wine products, thus creating viable, income-producing grape enterprises and creating more jobs for Ohio's economy. The Committee assures this critical goal is achieved through marketing programs such as the Cooperative Advertising program for wineries, Event Sponsorship program for non-profit organizations coordinating wine tastings and events, as well as providing point-of-purchase materials such as banners, posters, wine bags, wine guides, etc. for wineries and retailers. More than 2.7 million consumers visit Ohio wineries per year and programs such as these help keep Ohio wines in the forefront of the travel and tourism industry in Ohio. The Committee also invests heavily in research to help advance Ohio's grape and wine industry in the areas of viticulture (grape growing), enology (winemaking), plant pathology, and entomology. As the industry continues to grow, this research is very valuable to Ohio producers in order for them to produce high-quality, high-value winegrapes and wines.

Thank you for your time. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the Ohio Grape Industries Committee.