



**Ohioana Library Testimony
Sunset Review Committee
May 7, 2024**

Chairperson Wilkin and members of the Sunset Review Committee:

My name is David Weaver and I am the Executive Director of the Ohioana Library Association. Joining me today is Dr. Kimberlee Kiehl, who will succeed me as Executive Director on May 28.

On behalf of our Honorary Chair, First Lady Fran DeWine, and the members of our Board of Trustees, I am pleased to speak on behalf of our organization. Founded in 1929 by Ohio First Lady Martha Kinney Cooper, and celebrating its 95th anniversary this year, Ohioana is the model of a successful public/private partnership between the state of Ohio and a not-for-profit organization.

Ohioana's mission is to collect, preserve, and celebrate Ohio literature and other creative endeavors. We fulfill our mission through three major programs:

- Collection and Reference, which includes the development and maintenance of over 80,000 items by Ohioans or about Ohio subjects;
- Educational Outreach, which includes the *Ohioana Quarterly*, a copy of which is sent to every member of the Ohio House and Senate, the Ohioana Newsletter, our website and social media, and educational partnerships with the Ohio Arts Council, the State Library of Ohio, the Ohio Center for the Book, and the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio;
- Public Programming, which includes the annual Ohioana Awards, first presented in 1942 and the second oldest state literary prize in the nation; the Ohioana Book Festival, first presented with ten authors in 2007 and now the single largest literary event in Ohio; the Ohio Literary Trail, shining the spotlight on Ohio's unique role in shaping culture and literature worldwide; and new collaborations with the America 250-Ohio Commission

Through its collection, publications, events, and partnerships, the Ohioana Library directly serves more than 250,000 Ohioans per year and serves all Ohioans as the caretaker of our state's literary heritage.

We accomplish this with a small staff that consists of four full-time employees: an Executive Director, an Office Manager, a Library Specialist, and a Program Coordinator. Ohioana employees are not state employees, and do not participate in PERS or other state benefits.

We augment our staff by contracting help during major projects such as the Ohioana Book Festival, and by offering an annual paid internship for a college student. Most of all, we are fortunate to have more than 100 volunteers, led by the Ohioana Board of Trustees.

As mentioned, First Lady Fran DeWine serves as Honorary Chair of the Ohioana Library and is an ex-officio member of the Ohioana Board of Trustees, which is comprised of twenty-one trustees elected by the membership from across the state and four trustees appointed by the Governor of Ohio. All board members are volunteers and serve without compensation or stipend.

In FY2024, Ohioana's budget is \$650,000, of which \$314,000 is provided by the State of Ohio: \$191,000 in operating support, and the remaining \$123,000 in rental support for our facility, which we share with the State Library of Ohio.

Ohioana leverages its state allocation to generate support for programming from individuals, foundations, and organizations throughout Ohio.

In closing, we believe that the State of Ohio and the Ohioana Library Association is a collaboration that has served the people of Ohio well for 95 years. It is, as I stated in my opening, what we believe is the model of what a successful private/public partnership can be. We are asking for that partnership to continue.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd be pleased to answer any questions.

David Weaver
May 7, 2024