



February 7, 2012

The Honorable Dave Hall
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
Columbus, OH 43266-0603

Dear Chairman Hall:

I write in support of House Bill 415 which is before the House Agriculture and Natural Resources committee and will update the Ohio Agricultural Linked Deposit program. Ag Link was first established in the 1980s as one of five agricultural linked deposit programs. Unlike the other linked deposit programs, the loan amounts and the program funding are established in the law for Ag Link.

Ag Link is frequently used for short term operating loans and is geared toward small or beginning farmers. House Bill 415 makes three changes to the program:

- 1) It expands the dollars available in the loan from \$125 million (today) to \$165 million (once enacted).
- 2) It increases the amount of individual loans from \$100,000 to \$150,000 per loans.
- 3) It aligns the statutory language to recommendations from the Treasurer's office that is technical but will not affect the way the program is currently being run.

These changes are necessary and are well-thought-out. The capital requirements for farm operations continue to increase and lending programs need to be updated to continue to be relevant and useful to Ohio's farmers.

The Ohio AgriBusiness Association (OABA) is a membership-based state trade association whose membership includes the manufacturers and wholesale/retail suppliers of plant nutrients and plant protection materials, the grain warehousing and marketing industry, the feed industry and the seed industry, as well as companies providing equipment, financing, insurance, consulting and other products and services for the agribusiness industry. We are the leading advocate for Ohio agribusiness by creating a sustainable business climate through collaborative policy leadership, continuous education and effective communication.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate our support for House Bill 415. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached at 614-326-7520 or chenney@oaba.net.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher C. Henney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Christopher C. Henney
President and CEO

C: House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
State Representative Robert Sprague
State Representative Brian Hill
Herb Mayer, Chairman – OABA Board of Directors