



Ohio's "6119" Regional Water & Sewer Districts

October 10, 2017

Chairman Manning
Ranking Member Celebrezze
Members of the House Criminal Justice Committee

Re: HB 276

Dear Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Celebrezze, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide written comments on behalf of the Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts (CORD) in support of HB 276, which will help protect utility workers from being threatened while on the job.

CORD is a non-profit association established to assist, protect, and advance the interests of Ohio's Regional Water and Sewer Districts, also known as "6119 Districts" since they are established under Chapter 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code. 6119 Districts provide potable water, sanitary sewer, and storm water services to over 1 million customers in the State of Ohio.

Employees of 6119 Districts are often required to perform unpleasant services, such as turning off services, denying payments, and handling customer complaints. While these tasks are typically handled without incident, there are instances where tempers flare. In some cases, employees of our members are directly threatened by disgruntled customers.

While we do support the legislation, we would make two suggestions. First, ensure the bill's protections apply to contractors that a utility might utilize to perform a service. Second, include "storm water" in the definition of "utility" in the bill. I would urge you to consider these suggestions as you make changes to the legislation.

Utility workers often provide services that are critical to the health and safety of the community. Ohio's leaders should do everything they can to ensure they are protected.

On behalf of the members of CORD, I would like to thank Representatives Rezabek and Greenspan for their work on this important legislation and encourage you to contact me with any questions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



John Albers
Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts
Executive Committee Member