



S.B. 2 Proponent Testimony

**Brian M. Gresser, P.E., AOMWA President / Akron Water Reclamation Services Manager
House Energy and Natural Resources Committee**

May 9, 2017

Good morning, Chairman Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present written proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill 2. I am Brian Gresser, Manager of Water Reclamation Services for the City of Akron and President of the Association of Ohio Metropolitan Wastewater Agencies, also known as AOMWA.

AOMWA represents the interests of Ohio's public wastewater agencies, serving more than 4 million Ohioans and successfully treating more than 300 billion gallons of wastewater each year. AOMWA members include Akron, Avon Lake, Butler County, Canton, City of Hamilton, Columbus, Dayton, Fairfield, Hamilton County, Lancaster, Lima, Marysville, Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati, Middletown, Newark, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Portsmouth, Springfield, and Warren. The fundamental purpose of our organization and its members is to protect the water resources on which Ohio's communities depend. Indeed, our agencies are the front line of protection for these water resources and as a result of our efforts over the last 40 years, significant water quality improvements have occurred across Ohio.

As part of these efforts, our members have made longstanding and substantial investments in safe and clean water infrastructure aimed at protecting the public health of Ohio's citizenry. These infrastructure improvements include the investment of billions of dollars to address and eliminate wet weather overflows which can contribute to the nutrient problem. AOMWA also was an active part of Ohio's Nutrient Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and worked with Ohio EPA and other stakeholders to formulate a proposed approach for protecting our State's watersheds from phosphorus and nitrogen nutrient loading that leads to the harmful algal blooms that threaten Lake Erie and some inland lakes. Through these and similar such efforts, AOMWA and its members have helped to shape and lead Ohio public policy on water quality and nutrient issues.

As noted in the sponsor testimony of Senator Hite and proponent testimony of Ohio EPA Director Craig Butler, one important aspect of Senate Bill 2 are the provisions to further update and define the role and responsibilities of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC). These changes will better allow OLEC to help Ohio in meeting its commitments under the binational Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, which includes a goal of reducing phosphorus loading to Lake Erie's Western Basin by 40% by 2025. AOMWA and its members are a crucial part of the State's nutrient reduction

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efforts and, as such, support the changes proposed in Senate Bill 2 to allow OLEC to better advance these efforts and help protect Lake Erie.

In addition, Senate Bill 2 would help to address recurring asset management problems affecting Ohio's public water systems through the development and implementation of asset management programs. AOMWA is keenly aware of the infrastructure challenges facing Ohio's water and wastewater utilities and therefore supports these efforts as well.

Thank you, Chairman Landis and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee for the opportunity to submit this written proponent testimony. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any of these issues with our organization, please do not hesitate to contact Andrew Etter at andrew.etter@squirepb.com.

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