



## Office of Representative John E. Barnes, Jr.

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Thank you, Chair Landis, Vice Chair Hagan, Ranking Member O'Brien and my esteemed colleagues in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony on House Bill 671.

Under current law, all public water systems, including water systems operated by a school, must conduct testing for lead and other contaminants. A public water system operated by a school generally is referred to as a nontransient noncommunity water system. This type of system is a public water system that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year. However, not all schools operate a public water system. Instead, some receive their water from a community public water system, which generally is a system that supplies water to the same population year-round (for example, the Columbus municipal water system). There is no requirement in current law that a school that is not a public water system test the water in the school for lead.

House Bill 671 will:

1. require the Director of Environmental Protection to adopt rules requiring each school in Ohio that is not otherwise subject to water testing requirements to annually undergo lead testing of the school's drinking water;
2. require the rules to establish certain requirements such as testing standards and procedures and remediation requirements;
3. name the act the "State Water Quality Act for Kids"; and
4. declare an emergency.

Even a small amount of lead exposure can be dangerous, especially for children. "Lead in a child's body can slow down growth and development, damage hearing and speech, and lead to learning disabilities," the Government Accountability Office states in a report. It is time for the state of Ohio to make sure all schools are testing for lead in our children's water.

Thank you again for this opportunity, I would be happy to answer any questions.