

**Committees:**

Aging and Long Term Care: Chair  
Finance; Subcommittee on State Government and  
Agency Review  
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor  
State and Local Government



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-644-6011  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
Fax: 614-719-6980  
Rep89@ohiohouse.gov

**Representative Steven Arndt**  
Ohio House of Representatives, 89<sup>th</sup> House District

Chairman Ryan Smith, Vice Chair Scott Ryan, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 643 the Clean Lake 2020 Plan. I am pleased to be joined by my colleague, State Representative John Patterson as our efforts for a healthier Lake Erie cross party lines.

There is an urgent need for legislation that would help clean up Lake Erie. Already this calendar year, a number of actions have taken place that require us to work together to update our strategies to reduce phosphorus loading in the Western Lake Erie Basin. Ohio has agreed to reduce phosphorus loading by 40% by 2025, with an aspirational goal of 20% by the year 2020, but recent reports indicate our efforts so far will not yield results positive enough to meet our commitment under the binational water quality agreement. In order to meet these goals, Senator Gardner and I wrote this bill implementing recommendations proposed in a September 2017 White Paper entitled "Summary of Findings and Strategies to Move Toward a 40% Phosphorous Reduction" attached to supplement my testimony here today.

As a little bit of context, in 2015, Ohio, along with Michigan and Canada, entered into an agreement to reduce phosphorous levels in Lake Erie by 40% in 2025, with an aspirational reduction of 20% by 2020. However, recent reports from have indicated that our efforts so far are not on track to meet these goals. Failure to meet these goals has resulted in a federal lawsuit against the Ohio EPA and the U.S. EPA.

**Committees:**

Aging and Long Term Care: Chair  
Finance; Subcommittee on State Government and  
Agency Review  
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor  
State and Local Government



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-644-6011  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
Fax: 614-719-6980  
Rep89@ohiohouse.gov

**Representative Steven Arndt**  
Ohio House of Representatives, 89<sup>th</sup> House District

Phosphorous levels in the lake contribute to increased levels of cyanobacteria which recently resulted in the impairment of the Western Basin of Lake Erie.

This legislation is not a regulatory bill, it is a targeted funding solution bill, providing both GRF and capital funding for a variety of strategies that scientists, Lake Erie advocates, agriculture leaders, and others believe can help achieve our phosphorous reduction goals.

- **Ohio State Sea Grant/Stone Lab:** \$2.65 million Capital Funds. Capital funds shall be utilized for new 3,800 square feet of research lab space, in addition to purchasing in-lake monitoring equipment consisting of real-time buoys and water-treatment plant monitoring devices.
- **Healthy Lake Erie Initiative:** Up to \$10 million Capital Funds.

Additional investment (on top of the \$10 million in the just-passed Capital Appropriations Act) to support projects to enhance efforts to reduce open lake disposal of dredged materials into Lake Erie by 2020, according to current Ohio law.

- **Soil & Water Conservation Support Fund:** Up to \$3.5 million GRF.  
GRF funds to support county soil and water conservation districts in the Western Lake Erie Basin for staffing and to assist in soil testing, nutrient management plan development including manure transformation and manure conversion technologies, enhanced filter strips and water management, and other conservation support.
- **Targeted Phosphorus Reduction.** Up to \$20 million Capital Funds.  
The Ohio Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Lake Erie

**Committees:**

Aging and Long Term Care: Chair  
Finance; Subcommittee on State Government and  
Agency Review  
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor  
State and Local Government



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-644-6011  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
Fax: 614-719-6980  
Rep89@ohiohouse.gov

**Representative Steven Arndt**  
Ohio House of Representatives, 89<sup>th</sup> House District

Commission and the Ohio Soil & Water Commission, shall establish programs to assist in meeting reduce total phosphorus and dissolved reactive phosphorus in subwatersheds of the Western Lake Erie Basin. Priority shall be given to those subwatersheds determined to be highest in total phosphorus and dissolved reactive phosphorus nutrient loading. Programs shall include, but not be limited to, capital funds for purchasing of equipment for subsurface placement of nutrients into the soil, equipment for nutrient placement based on GIS soil testing and variable rate technology, water management efforts, manure conversion technologies, additional tributary monitoring, and edge-of-field drainage structures.

**Rep. Patterson Portion**

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Ryan, Ranking Member Cera and my colleagues on the House Finance Committee, not only do I thank you for the opportunity to stand in support of HB 643, but I would like to offer a perspective of the bill from the Central Basin of our Great Lake.

The challenges of water quality impact all of us who live, work, and play along the North Coast. My District is the home of not one, but two deep water ports in Conneaut and Ashtabula—let alone the marina at the Geneva-on-the-Lake State Park and other private marinas along the lakefront. My District is the home of Ohio's largest inland lake, Pymatuning, as well as Ohio's largest

**Committees:**

Aging and Long Term Care: Chair  
Finance; Subcommittee on State Government and  
Agency Review  
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor  
State and Local Government



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-644-6011  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
Fax: 614-719-6980  
Rep89@ohiohouse.gov

**Representative Steven Arndt**  
Ohio House of Representatives, 89<sup>th</sup> House District

private lake, Roaming Shores. Clearly water quality for consumption, business, and pleasure is critically important to my constituents.

Speaking of those two deep water ports, Conneaut and Ashtabula are dredged every other year. The prohibition of open lake dumping of dredged material weighs heavily upon my people. The lake is much deeper in the Central basin and our tributaries (the Ashtabula River and the Conneaut Creek) contain phosphorus levels well below those which would evoke concern from the EPA. And yet we will be forced to dispose of the material in a way that is much more expensive—at least for now—until alternative uses are discovered and made available (which is one such tangible component of this bill).

The 99<sup>th</sup> District is one of the most diverse agricultural areas in all of Ohio: from dairy and livestock, to poultry, elk, and even fish farms; from traditional crops of corn, beans, and wheat to peas and barley; from the orchards laden with apples and peaches to our vineyards (and the home of over 30 wineries); from Christmas trees to maple trees and miscanthus grass—we fully understand the absolute necessity of soil and water conservation. This is why, in 2015 our OSU Extension office, Soil and Water Conservation District personnel, and other interested parties formed the Phosphorus Task Force. For three years now we have been recording days of field activity—or should I say non-field activity—should SB 1 ever be implemented in NE Ohio. In addition to lake effect snow, in my district we also receive lake enhanced rain leaving our clay

**Committees:**

Aging and Long Term Care: Chair  
Finance; Subcommittee on State Government and  
Agency Review  
Economic Development, Commerce & Labor  
State and Local Government



**Contact Information:**

Office: 614-644-6011  
Toll-Free: 1-800-282-0253  
Fax: 614-719-6980  
Rep89@ohiohouse.gov

**Representative Steven Arndt**  
Ohio House of Representatives, 89<sup>th</sup> House District

soil saturated to a point where manure application would not be permissible on many, many days. However, our tributaries are fairly free of phosphorus due, in part, to our conservation practices, buffer strips, and ample woodland filtration systems. As the Representative of the 99<sup>th</sup> House District, I am proud of the proactive steps we have taken in my district to improve water quality. .

HB 643 is a piece of legislation that reflects our intent to be good stewards of the land and water while, prudently and simultaneously, using these resources to promote economic development.

In sum, as one who represents a District on the lake that is tied to the lake, with a diverse agricultural economy dependent of the lake, I am honored to support this legislation and enthusiastically support its passage. We will entertain any questions that the committee might have at this point.