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Committees:

- Finance – *Ranking Minority Member*
- Agriculture
- Energy and Natural Resources
- Finance – General Government & Agency Review Subcommittee
- Government Oversight and Reform
- Judiciary

Before the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
Senate Bill 58 – Ohio Public Lands Day
Sponsor Testimony by Senator Michael J. Skindell
March 1, 2017

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chair Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on SB 58, which designates the third Saturday in May as Ohio Public Lands Day. In 2015, the Ohio House passed House Resolution 120 recognizing the 2015 National Public Lands Day. Celebrating Ohio's public lands should be a reoccurring event in our state.

Currently National Public Lands Day is a tool used to rally volunteers for land conservation. Other states such as Colorado, Washington, and New Mexico have honored in their state legislatures the benefits of their public lands. Ohio deserves its own Public Lands Day to celebrate and conserve the natural treasures of our state, such as state forests, wildlife areas, reservoirs, and boating areas. Whether it is for recreation, exercise, fishing, hunting, education, or family bonding, our public lands provide value to all Ohioans.

Ohio has 421,700 acres of public land (1.6% of Ohio) owned by the states, and additionally 256,960 (.98% of Ohio) owned by the Feds. Establishing an Ohio Public Lands Day would invite all to enjoy the great outdoors and celebrate the lands that give us so much.

Chairman Balderson, Vice Chair Jordan, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I would be happy to answer any questions relating to this matter.