



Ohio House of Representatives

**State Representative Erica C. Crawley
Ohio House District 26**

**State Representative Brett Hillyer
Ohio House District 98
House Bill 360 Sponsor Testimony (as prepared)**

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity for Representative Hillyer and I to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 360, which would require water bottle filling stations and drinking fountains in newly constructed school buildings.

This legislation is important because we know that water plays a critical role in helping the body function. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that children should have free access to water, particularly during school hours ^[1]. Some health benefits of water include reducing the transmission of communicable diseases, regulating temperature, protecting sensitive tissues, transporting nutrients, and ridding the body of wastes. Adequate water intake has been shown to improve students' classroom focus and academic performance. In addition to all of the health benefits of water, when schools install bottle filling stations students are more likely to be at a healthy weight, consume more water, and reduce the intake of sugary beverages.

- In Columbus, 1 of every 3 children will enter kindergarten at an unhealthy weight. ^[2]
- For children, every sugary drink they consume increases their likelihood of developing obesity during childhood by about 60%.^[3]
- In 2009/2010 about 40% of Ohio's 3rd graders drank 2 or more sugary drinks a day. ^[4]

[1] American Academy of Pediatrics. Committee on Nutrition and the Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness. Sports drinks and energy drinks for children and adolescents: are they appropriate? *Pediatrics*. 2011;127:1182-1189.

[2] Growing Healthy Kids Columbus PowerPoint. Columbus Public Health

[3] Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective, observational analysis. *Lancet* 2001; 357: 505-08.

[4] Ohio Department of Health, A Report on the Body Mass Index of Ohio's Third Graders 2004-2010 [5] The Weight of the Nation. Marketing Food to Children.

[5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools. Atlanta GA: US Dept. of Health and Human Services; 2014.

[6] Schwartz AE, Leardo M, Aneja S, Elbel B. Effect of a school-based water intervention on child body mass index and obesity. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2016; 170(3):220-6, doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2015.3778.

[7] Elbel B, Mijanovich T, Abrams C, Cantor J, Dunn L, Nonas C, Cappola K, Onufrak S, Park S. A water availability intervention in New York City public schools: influence on youths' water and milk behaviors. *Am J Public Health*. 2015; 105(2):365-72, doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2014.302221.

The CDC notes that schools are in a unique position to promote healthy, dietary behaviors including drinking water. Some of the reasons for this include that more than 95% of children and adolescents are enrolled in school and students and adolescents spend at least 6 hours at school each day. Schools can provide access to safe, free drinking water providing students with an alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages before, during, and after school [5].

The installation of bottle filling stations in schools is associated with a decline in the likelihood of being overweight [6]. Students are also more likely to consume more water, and reduce the intake of sugary beverages when their school installs bottle filling stations in the cafeteria. When bottle filling stations were installed in the cafeterias of nine public schools, students nearly tripled their water intake at lunchtime. These results persisted the following school year, even with no promotional campaign [7].

This legislation would require that:

- Newly constructed school buildings under the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission include a minimum of two bottle filling stations in each building.
- That there is at least one drinking fountain or water bottle filling station on each floor and wing of each building.
- That there is at least one drinking fountain or water bottle filling station for every one hundred students projected to attend the building after the completion of the project.

The cost of installing these bottle filling stations is relatively neutral as schools are already required to install 1 water fountain per 100 students. This legislation requires 2 of those be bottle filling stations. It is completely up to the school district as to the make, model, and specifications of bottle filling stations and water fountains. This legislation also ensures equity in both rural and urban areas that all new schools receive the same quality water access.

Earlier this year, the state of Kentucky passed similar legislation that allowed for more than 650,000 public school students to have better access to hydration. The state of West Virginia has made efforts to promote the environmentally responsible use of reusable water bottles through bottle filling stations; by offering a Bottle Filling Station Grant program for nonprofits, schools, and local government entities through the West Virginia American Water company.

An added benefit of bottle filling stations is that they provide a reduction in plastic pollution and the amount of disposable plastic water bottles that end up in landfills. As we work to ensure that our community's children are their healthiest I ask for favorable consideration and

[1] American Academy of Pediatrics. Committee on Nutrition and the Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness. Sports drinks and energy drinks for children and adolescents: are they appropriate? *Pediatrics*. 2011;127:1182-1189.

[2] Growing Healthy Kids Columbus PowerPoint. Columbus Public Health

[3] Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective, observational analysis. *Lancet* 2001; 357: 505-08.

[4] Ohio Department of Health, A Report on the Body Mass Index of Ohio's Third Graders 2004-2010 [5] The Weight of the Nation. Marketing Food to Children.

[5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools. Atlanta GA: US Dept. of Health and Human Services; 2014.

[6] Schwartz AE, Leardo M, Aneja S, Elbel B. Effect of a school-based water intervention on child body mass index and obesity. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2016; 170(3):220-6, doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2015.3778.

[7] Elbel B, Mijanovich T, Abrams C, Cantor J, Dunn L, Nonas C, Cappola K, Onufrak S, Park S. A water availability intervention in New York City public schools: influence on youths' water and milk behaviors. *Am J Public Health*. 2015; 105(2):365-72, doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2014.302221.

passage of this legislation. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and after Representative Hillyer speaks to the legislation, we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

[1] American Academy of Pediatrics. Committee on Nutrition and the Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness. Sports drinks and energy drinks for children and adolescents: are they appropriate? *Pediatrics*. 2011;127:1182-1189.

[2] Growing Healthy Kids Columbus PowerPoint. Columbus Public Health

[3] Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective, observational analysis. *Lancet* 2001; 357: 505–08.

[4] Ohio Department of Health, A Report on the Body Mass Index of Ohio's Third Graders 2004–2010 [5] The Weight of the Nation. Marketing Food to Children.

[5] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools. Atlanta GA: US Dept. of Health and Human Services; 2014.

[6] Schwartz AE, Leardo M, Aneja S, Elbel B. Effect of a school-based water intervention on child body mass index and obesity. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2016; 170(3):220-6, doi: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2015.3778.

[7] Elbel B, Mijanovich T, Abrams C, Cantor J, Dunn L, Nonas C, Cappola K, Onufrak S, Park S. A water availability intervention in New York City public schools: influence on youths' water and milk behaviors. *Am J Public Health*. 2015; 105(2):365-72, doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2014.302221.