



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

**House State and Local Government Committee
Written Proponent Testimony — House Bill 264
William Murdock, Executive Director
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
October 9, 2019**

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony to you today regarding the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) support of House Bill 264 (HB264).

My name is William Murdock and I am the Executive Director of MORPC. MORPC is a regional council of 70 local governments across Central Ohio's rural, suburban, and urban areas. We provide programs, services, and funding related to transportation, land use, data, sustainability, and economic prosperity. MORPC's membership consists of cities, townships, counties, villages, and other government entities.

MORPC's Water Resources Program seeks to improve and protect water quality through education, policies, and collaborative regional planning. MORPC staff facilitate a water planning service on behalf of the Ohio EPA that updates the water quality management strategies for the seven-county Central Ohio area. In this role, we work on broader water quality planning, including watershed and stormwater management. To assist us with that process, local governments must create plans for sewage disposal system management. These local governments are critical partners as they consider the broader water quality picture in the region.

HB 264 authorizes the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) to make loans and grants to persons and government agencies for the refinancing of certain public water and waste water infrastructure projects. It helps local governments obtain more economical financing on projects that will improve water management. As such, MORPC supports this bipartisan legislation that would provide a critical refinancing tool for local governments, saving precious resources.

OWDA offers local governments loans for planning and design or construction of water supply or distribution facilities, wastewater treatment and collection facilities, stormwater facilities or solid waste facilities. With interest rates on these five to thirty-year loans set at the time of loan approval, local governments could at any point be financed at an interest rate higher than what is currently available. In a time where local budgets are already significantly strapped, seemingly small funding fixes matter to local governments. We believe that local governments should be able to take advantage of the best financing OWDA is able to offer.

In conclusion, MORPC stands behind the coalition of groups and political leadership across our state who seek to improve Ohio's water quality as critical goal for the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written proponent testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me, at 614-233-4101 or at wmurdock@morpc.org with any questions or whenever MORPC can be of assistance.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Murdock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

William Murdock, AICP
MORPC Executive Director