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Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee  
House Bill 264 – Proponent Written Testimony

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Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Williams, and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony in support of House Bill 264, which would allow the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) to refinance loans for public water and waste water infrastructure projects.

The cost of water infrastructure projects is a heavy burden on counties and other local governments. Many counties struggle to cope with maintaining aging water and waste water infrastructure and the government mandates placed over these systems. Having adequate water and waste water infrastructure in place is also a critical component to economic growth and development in many parts of Ohio. Counties appreciate every tool available to assist in financing these critical projects.

Created in 1968, OWDA provides critical assistance to local government agencies through financing water and waste water infrastructure projects across the state. Ohio counties, cities, villages, water and sewer districts and others all benefit from the financing options and programs offered by OWDA to preserve, upgrade, develop and best manage community water resources.

Under current statute, OWDA is limited to only financing water and waste water projects. House Bill 264 expands OWDA's authority to both finance and refinance public water and waste water projects. This small but important statutory change would allow counties to evaluate the interest rates they are paying for past projects, and if feasible, refinance those loans to lower rates. Such a change would positively impact counties and save taxpayer dollars.

CCAO thanks Representatives Wilkin and O'Brien for introducing this legislation to provide greater flexibility to OWDA and save our local governments money. CCAO also thanks the committee for its consideration of our proponent testimony on this important piece of legislation.



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