



Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee HB 264

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Joseph Pheil and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Rural Water Association (ORWA). Thank you for allowing me to provide written comments in support of HB 264.

Since 1976 ORWA has been an advocate and provider of on-site technical assistance for rural communities with water and wastewater systems throughout Ohio. Today, we continue to expand our membership and the base of benefits we provide to our members. Our system members provide water and/or wastewater services to approximately 2.01 million Ohioans.

ORWA's members have made great investments in their systems over the years with the support of various funding agencies, including OWDA. Despite these investments, more improvements are necessary, and those improvements can be extremely expensive, especially for small, rural systems. Allowing systems to take advantage of favorable market conditions by refinancing loans through OWDA will improve the financial stability of the system and ensure that the customers they serve continue to have access to clean and affordable water.

ORWA would like to thank the sponsors for the development of this creative approach and urge your support for this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Joseph Pheil, Executive Director
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