



Before the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 2
February 22, 2017

Chairman Balderson, Ranking Member O'Brien and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, my name is Zachary Frymier and I am the Director of Energy and Environmental Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 2.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and we represent nearly 8,000 companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

Last year, the Ohio Chamber supported Senate Bill 333 because it aimed to make several positive changes to our state's environmental laws. SB 2 will largely achieve these same goals.

The state's Certified Water Quality Professional Program, created in the last budget, allows for highly qualified professionals working in the private sector to analyze wetlands and streams for permitting. The CWQP program cuts the costs of environmental reviews without threatening accuracy. SB 2 strengthens this important program by, among other items, speeding the review of applications submitted by a certified professional.

Consistent with federal law, SB 2 would also extend to the Ohio EPA director the flexibility to waive a 401 water quality certification and allow the start of a project already permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

This legislation establishes a sensible regulatory structure to address construction and demolition debris processing facilities. Despite the fact that the vast majority of owners in this industry operate their facilities responsibly, bad actors occasionally collect materials and then leave it abandoned. Allowing Ohio EPA to write sensible rules regulating the construction and demolition debris industry will boost confidence in the recycling industry.

Lastly, the encouragement of beneficial use of materials has long been supported by the Ohio Chamber. SB 2 improves Ohio's approach to blast furnace slag, steel slag, and dredged materials. In particular, as Ohio approaches the 2020 ban on the disposing of dredged materials in the open waters of Lake Erie, it is critical to implement a dredged material beneficial use program. This legislation moves us closer to that goal by allowing Ohio EPA to improve the environment and keep Ohio's navigable channels open for business.

SB 2 makes important improvements to Ohio's overall business climate and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce urges your support. Thank you.