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HB 360 - Proponent Testimony
Ohio House Commerce & Labor Committee

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan, and other members of the House Commerce & Labor Committee, I am Dustin Holfinger, the State Government Relations Director for the American Heart Association (AHA). The AHA is a non-profit organization that funds cardiovascular medical research, educates consumers on healthy living, and fosters appropriate cardiac care in an effort to reduce disability and deaths caused by cardiovascular disease and stroke.

We all know that water is crucial to human health as it regulates body temperature, protects sensitive tissues, transports nutrients, and rids the body of waste. Sadly, most children and adolescents are not consuming enough water¹. Currently, the state of Ohio requires one drinking fountain per one hundred students be installed in our school buildings². The AHA has a commitment to ensuring that children are as healthy as possible, so in order to make sure children and adolescents are getting plenty of water, we are requesting that all newly constructed schools and schools undergoing major renovations include bottle filling stations as well as drinking fountains.

Many teachers have begun to require their students to bring a reusable water bottle to school to fill up and keep at their desk. Their request is substantiated by a commitment to keep students in the classroom longer and to prevent the spread of germs that comes with sharing a drinking fountain.

According to The State of Obesity, Ohio has an obesity rate of 34.0%³. This value has been increasing linearly since 1990 when the rate was 11.3%⁴. Increasing water consumption in childhood can lead to a much lower risk of obesity⁵. Additionally, adequate water intake may also positively impact cognition. It has been shown to improve students' classroom focus and academic performance⁶.

Unsurprisingly, not all water intake is expected to come from plain drinking water. The U.S. Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommends that boys and girls between the ages of 4-8 years consume roughly 7 cups of water each day. Girls between the ages of 9-13 years should consume roughly 9 cups of water per day, and boys the same age should consume roughly 10 cups of water per day⁷. Unfortunately, *fewer than one-third* of children and adolescents meet or exceed these recommendations⁸. In fact, merely 25% of children and adolescents drink **less than one serving of water per day**⁹. This data demonstrates that implementing water bottle filling stations is a small change that will have a major impact on student's overall health, well-being, and academic success.

Thank you for your time and consideration of supporting House Bill 360. I will now be happy to answer any questions you might have.



CITATIONS:

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4. The State of Obesity: 2018 Issue Report. Trust for America's Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Page 20
5. James J, Thomas P, Cavan D, Kerr D. Preventing childhood obesity by reducing consumption of carbonated drinks: cluster randomised controlled trial. *BMJ* 328.7450 (2004): 1237.
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7. Institute of Medicine. *Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride, and Sulfate.* Washington, DC: The National Academies, 2004.
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9. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Beverage consumption among high school students --- United States, 2010. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2013;60(23):778-780