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**Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Testimony on Senate Bill 2
Before the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Tony Seegers, Director of State Policy
January 22, 2020**

Chairman Vitale, Vice Chair Kick, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee, on behalf of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and its members, thank you for the opportunity to present additional testimony in support of SB 2.

Before I specifically address SB 2, I think it is important to answer the overall question of how will SB 2, H2Ohio, and HB 7 work together? H2Ohio is the grand strategy for addressing our state's water quality issues and SB 2 will supplement H2Ohio by helping to coordinate and focus efforts. Further, many water quality projects, be they ODA, ODNR, or OEPA projects, will take place over several years. Because of this, HB 7 will serve as a long term funding mechanism for H2Ohio and for the programs that are being put into place.

As Sen. Peterson testified in his sponsor testimony, watershed planning and management coordinators will serve as a sort of "quarterback" for the watersheds they operate in. These coordinators will help our soil and water conservation districts to identify sources and areas of water quality impairment. Such work will help focus efforts so we will see the most effective use of H2Ohio funding for reducing phosphorus in our waterways.

Additionally, I like to equate SB 2 as a "force multiplier" for H2Ohio and water quality improvement. Watershed planning and management coordinators will be tasked to help political subdivisions and organizations in formulating nine-element plans. Nine-element plans are mandatory to receive federal 319 grants and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding, which will supplement H2Ohio funds. Nine-element plans are recognized as serving a specific purpose—removing nonpoint source impairments—within a larger watershed restoration effort. They are a very useful tool for watershed management and for keeping projects on track for completion.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the House Energy and Natural Resources Committee. We believe that SB 2 is an important component in the water quality efforts for our state and ask that you favorably consider the bill. I will be happy to answer any questions.