



November 16, 2022

The Honorable Jason Stephens
Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S High St.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Proponent Testimony- Substitute (Sub) HB 430 (Representative Cross)

Chairman Stephens, Vice Chairman Stewart, Ranking Member Weinstein and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kevin Schimming and, as Director of Public Relations and Communications for the Ohio Utilities Protection Service, d.b.a OHIO811, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak with you and provide proponent testimony in regards to Sub HB 430.

OHIO811 is a not-for-profit, member driven organization that's been operating in Ohio for nearly 50 years. We serve Ohio as the communication link between those who have a need to excavate and those who own, operate and maintain the essential underground utility infrastructure that we all rely on. OHIO811's mission is one of public safety, helping to protect Ohio's 11.8 million citizens, public and private property, and the environment through an efficient and effective stakeholder communication process.

Although primarily consisting of stakeholders such as utility companies, municipal and governmental entities and utility cooperatives, our diverse membership also includes excavators, contractors, engineering and design firms, contract locating companies and other industry trade organizations that operate on a local, state and national level.

Through broad based public education and awareness initiatives, OHIO811 strives to facilitate understanding and foster cooperation amongst industry stakeholders. Our efforts provide all Ohioans with a safer place to live and work.

In reviewing Sub HB 430, we believe that the additional protections it affords in preventing unwanted and illegal encroachment on to hazardous liquid and gas pipeline right of ways is a significant advancement for public safety. It will help protect Ohio's essential underground utility infrastructure and may prevent serious or even fatal incidents from occurring.

During our nearly 50 years of service we have come to recognize that effective and efficient communication amongst stakeholders is at the foundation of public safety. The provisions of this bill substantially enhance communications by creating an efficient mechanism through which pipeline owners and entities planning projects in proximity to hazardous liquid and gas pipelines can communicate and exchange critically important safety information prior to any excavation activity taking place.

*The OHIO811 mission is to serve the customers' needs by providing a quality one call process
to: protect the public; protect the underground infrastructure; protect the environment.*

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It is our perspective that significant efforts were taken to ensure that the provisions in Sub HB 430 align with the existing and enforceable design process requirements codified in ORC 3781.27 and 153.64. We fully support this approach and believe that it substantially minimizes the potential for confusion or disruption amongst the thousands of stakeholders who currently utilize this process.

As an organization that represents a multi-stakeholder industry, OHIO811 has historically supported legislation that is limited in scope and does not create over reaching or unintended mandates. Based on our review, Sub HB 430 has been narrowly crafted to not create undue burden for any entity that does not already have that obligation under the current statute.

Today, OHIO811 stands as a proponent of Sub HB 430. We are confident that it creates an efficient and effective mechanism through which pipeline owners and entities planning projects in proximity to hazardous liquid and gas pipelines can communicate and exchange critically important safety information prior to any excavation activity taking place.

It is our sincere belief that this legislation, as written, has the potential to prevent serious or even fatal incidents from occurring and will result in a greater level of safety for all of Ohio.

Thank you for your continued support of a safer Ohio. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Schimming', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin Schimming
Director of Public Relations & Community Affairs
OHIO811

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