



Richland Public Health

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May 9, 2022

House State and Local Government Committee
Chairman Scott Wiggam

Dear Representative Stephens, Representative Wiggam and Senator Peterson:

On behalf of the Richland County Board of Health, I wanted to thank you for initiating a conversation among legislators as well public health and local government associations and their respective memberships. The Board of Health, as well as myself, share concern with the As Introduced version of HB 463 and SB 324 as the elimination of a county's District Advisory Council (DAC) will reduce the communication link between the county health district and the residents within the townships. The District Advisory Counsel, as it is comprised by ORC 3709.03 (A) ensures that Board of Health members are appointed by the township trustees, who are elected by their constituents to administer the operations of their particular subdivision. In the case of Richland County, the District Advisory Council is comprised of 25 members (18 Township representative and 7 Mayors of communities that do not constitute a health district on their own). Therefore, the appointment of Board of Health members by the DAC must be by the consensus of 25 different individuals representing an array of demographics, geographics, political alignment, profession/trade, and many other factors. It is the Richland County Board of Health's belief that eliminating this body's roles and responsibilities, diminishes the voice of Richland County's diverse citizens.

The Association of Ohio Health Commissioners has shared a list of proposed suggestions for future iterations of both HB 463 and SB 324 that meet the desire for more accountability and transparency for health district governance. The list in the letter from Erik Balster, AOHC President, dated April 19, 2022 (included for your reference) was discussed at length with local public health Health Commissioners and will continue to be collaborated on with invested partners, such as the Ohio Township Association and Ohio Municipal League. Locally, I will continue to engage in conversations regarding HB 463 and SB 324 and proposed reforms with local township trustees, village mayors, the Richland County Board of Health, and Richland County's representing legislators.

Your time to dialogue about needed modernization to the Ohio Revised Code regarding the roles and responsibilities of the DAC is very much appreciated and, should you like to discuss this further, you are welcome to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Sarah M. Goodwill Humphrey, MPH, CPH, REHS
Health Commissioner
Richland Public Health

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