



**Before the Senate Energy & Public Utilities Committee
Proponent Testimony on House Bill 364
November 29th, 2022**

Chairman McColley, Vice Chairman Schuring, Ranking Member Martin and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, my name is Tony Long, and I am the Director of Tax & Economic Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 364.

For 129 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state's leading business advocate, and we represent over 8,000 small and large companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness, and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

House Bill 364 seeks to provide clarity and streamline the preparation and regulatory evaluation of System Improvement Charge (SIC) filings for private water and wastewater companies. Often, to fulfill Ohio and U.S. EPA compliance, these companies may need to upgrade entire systems rather than replace them with the same equipment if the equivalent is no longer produced. HB 364 will permit these actions as long as the investment is deemed prudent and qualifies for inclusion under the SIC. The SIC will also remain capped at 3% for a sewage disposal systems company and 4.25% for a waterworks company to ensure that customers will not experience dramatic price shocks at the following rate case.

Access to safe, clean water is a distinct advantage for businesses to when they locate or grow within our state. Therefore, HB 364 is necessary to create a process addressing the timeliness of aging water and sewage disposal infrastructure investment needed to maintain the water quality that Ohio businesses rely on. We were extremely pleased to see bipartisan support for this legislation in the Ohio House, which unanimously reported it out of committee and voted it off the floor by a vote of 74-15.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 364, which we urge the committee to favorably report for consideration.