

To: Chairman Kick, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee

From: Robert Podach, City of Fostoria Councilman-at-Large and Seneca County Board of Health Member

Subject: SB 119 Proponent Testimony, 4<sup>th</sup> Hearing, May 1, 2024

Chairman Kick, Vice Chair Lear, Ranking Member Rogers, and Members of the House Energy & Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Robert Podach, and I am a City of Fostoria Councilman-at-Large and a member of the Seneca County Board of Health. I am here to ask for your support of Senate Bill 119.

On February 14, Senator Bill Reineke sent a letter to Governor Mike DeWine requesting his engagement in the discussions surrounding SB 119 and the ongoing obstacles our community faces as we seek to empower the health department with more oversight of WIN Waste of Seneca County. I submitted a copy of the letter with my testimony.

For many years, Fostoria area residents fought the landfill virtually alone. Former county commissioners and former health department leadership failed to assist our efforts to protect our families and our neighbors.

That has now changed.

Many elected officials now stand with us in our efforts to equip the Seneca County General Health District with the resources needed to properly oversee the landfill's operations, including all three Seneca County Commissioners and the Seneca County Health Commissioner. Over 50 local elected officials signed their names to Sen. Reineke's letter to Gov. DeWine, providing evidence of countywide support of SB 119. They include county, city, village and township leaders.

Some of the elected officials who signed the letter are in this room, and I would like them now to stand.

Each leader here represents a multitude of constituents who are dependent on your support of SB 119. We need your help to protect our communities.

In his letter to Governor DeWine, Sen. Reineke wrote:

“Every attempt our local communities have made to fix this ongoing problem has been met with legal roadblocks. Our constituents are convinced that big government is permitting a large company with its many resources to force our community to live with

the impacts of these landfill issues for hundreds of years without truly considering the public input.”

We in this room are now asking you to consider our input. We are asking you to free our community from the restraint of big government and empower us to protect ourselves. Please support SB 119 so our local, unified government officials can take the steps necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of our community.