



OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

November 20, 2024

Representative Jay Edwards
Chair, Ohio House Finance Committee
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Edwards,

On behalf of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, I am submitting this letter of support for House Bill 683. HB 683 provides additional funding to the Department of Agriculture that will ultimately add more resources for soil and water conservation districts (SWCD) of Ohio.

Each SWCD provide technical, financial, and education resources for local land users about conservation. SWCDs develop and implement programs to protect and conserve soil, water, prime farmland, woodland, wildlife, and urban areas. The additional \$10 million dollars will aid SWCD carry out programing for fiscal year 2025.

SWCDs are vital to the agriculture sector of Ohio's economy specifically, and to Ohio's economic development more generally. SWCDs also add to the vitality of Ohio's travel and tourism industry keeping Ohio's natural resources best in class.

Thank you for the opportunity to add our letter of support. The Ohio Chamber of Commerce, through its *Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Future* identified sense of place as a pillar of Ohio's future. As part of that pillar, policy recommendations included capitalization of Ohio's unique features and to maximize economic opportunities in conjunction with Ohio's recreational assets. SWCDs play an important part in maintain and enhancing Ohio's natural environment and amenities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Long".

Tony Long
General Counsel &
Director of Energy & Environmental Policy
Ohio Chamber of Commerce
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