



December 12, 2023

The Honorable Dick Stein
Chairman, House Public Utilities Committee
Ohio House – Riffe Center
77 S. High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Blessing:

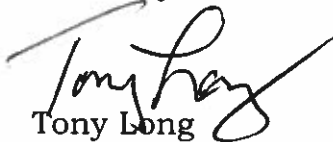
For 130 years, the Ohio Chamber has served as the state's leading business advocate, and we represent over 8,000 small and large companies that do business in Ohio. On behalf of those Ohio Chamber members, I am submitting this letter of support for House Bill 226.

Over the last decade an emphasis has been placed on removing lead from households, be it paint or water pipes and other infrastructure. HB 226 allows the few private water companies to assist with lead pipe removal. Whether as part of a scheduled water main project or as reimbursement for customers that replaced lead water lines mandated by a state or federal regulatory agency. HB 226 is a sensible measure to allow water companies to assist customers and receive cost recovery through the rate case process at the Ohio Public Utilities Commission (PUCO). Without HB 226 customers may not seek to have lead water lines replaced as quickly or face out of pocket costs that are higher than customers of municipal waterwork companies.

HB 226 also aligns with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce Blueprint for Ohio's Economic Future. In that report the Ohio Chamber identified six levers of public policy to continue the growth of Ohio's economy and build a state for the benefit of all Ohioans. Lead waterline removal addresses both a sense of place for Ohio households and improvement of the infrastructure of Ohio.

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce supports this legislative effort to create a better Ohio for the citizens of Ohio. It both solves a safety concern with lead pipes and provides an economic solution affordable for customers and water companies alike that can speed up the removal of these old lead pipe water lines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tony Long
General Counsel and
Director of Energy & Environmental Policy