



**Before the House Public Utilities Committee**  
**House Bill 369 – Eliminate 10-year Limitation on County Utility Supply Contracts**  
**Sponsor Testimony by Representative Michael J. Skindell**  
**April 24, 2024**

Chairman Stein, Vice Chairman Robb Blasdel, Ranking Member Weinstein, and Members of the House Public Utilities Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 369.

HB 369 simply amends Ohio Revised Code Section 307.04 to remove the current 10-year limitation placed on counties on contracts for supplying light, heat or power to county buildings. This unnecessary provision severely hampers the ability of counties to seek low-cost utilities for its buildings or to promote economic, local energy or energy efficient development. It is important to note that municipal governments do not have a similar limitation on their utility supply contracts.

Let me provide a hypothetical example where the removal of the limitations cap may be helpful. There is a utility company that for decades has provided chilled water and steam to commercial, government and residential clients in the downtown Cleveland Business District. The utility company maintains Cleveland's extensive network of underground pipes that supplies steam heat and chilled water for heating and cooling of many downtown facilities. The company also maintains the facility used to heat and cool the water that is delivered to the buildings. The company provides a low-cost utility to these facilities. Of course, any major upgrades of the utility infrastructure would be costly, but costs can be lowered with long-term financing. The city of Cleveland can work with this utility through long-term contracts to help the utility obtain the appropriate financing. Unfortunately, the county is much more limited to assist the utility due to the 10-year utility contract limitations. This obsolete provision in the law impedes development.

It is also important to note that in 2021 Ohio law was changed to remove the 10-year cap on counties' utility contracts where the contracts are entered into under a joint purchasing program. A joint purchasing program enables local governments to jointly enter into contracts through another political subdivision's contract. Unfortunately, where the county wants to enter into contracts in other circumstances, the 10-year limitation is still applicable on utility supply contracts.

Chairman Stein, Vice Chairman Robb Blasdel, Ranking Member Weinstein, and Members of the House Public Utilities Committee, thank you for your consideration of House Bill 369. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.