

**Association of Ohio Drinking Water Agencies**  
**Jeff Bronowski**  
**H.B. 507**  
**House Technology & Innovation Committee**

Chairwoman Miller, Vice Chair Claggett, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Association of Ohio Drinking Water Agencies (or “AODWA”). My name is Jeff Bronowski, and I am the Water Bureau Manager at the City of Akron, which is a member of AODWA.

AODWA represents the interests of Ohio’s drinking water agencies. AODWA’s members include the cities of Akron, Avon Lake, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Delaware, Fairfield, Lima, Salem, Toledo, Warren, Greene County, and the Del-Co Water Company. Together, our membership provides water service to over half the citizens of Ohio. A fundamental purpose of our organization and its members is to ensure safe and clean drinking water for Ohioans.

AODWA supports H.B. 507 because this bill encourages utilities to develop proactive cybersecurity measures and provides a safe harbor for those utilities that do so.

Ohio’s drinking water agencies are responsible for treating the water before it reaches the tap. Accordingly, these drinking water agencies are the primary line of defense for ensuring that clean and safe drinking water is provided to the public. We believe that H.B. 507 would support this fundamental mission because it encourages drinking water utilities to develop cybersecurity programs. HB 507 would provide certain legal protections to utilities that develop programs, which would incentivize those utilities to be proactive in guarding against cyberattacks.

Recent events have demonstrated why this bill is important. In 2021, a hacker successfully gained access to the water treatment system of a city in Florida. The hacker increased the levels of sodium hydroxide in the city’s water, placing thousands at risk of being poisoned. The hacker adjusted the level of sodium hydroxide to more than 100 times its normal levels. Fortunately, the local operator detected the issue promptly and restored the level back to normal operation. Although no one was injured, the incident demonstrates the risks that drinking water utilities face. H.B. 507 would help to ensure that nothing similar happens in Ohio because it will encourage utilities to be proactive in developing cybersecurity programs.

AODWA and its member agencies strongly support H.B. 507. Chairwoman Miller and Members of the Committee, your attention and consideration in this matter are very much appreciated.