

Hello Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and the members of the Senate Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee.

My name is Elliott Shaffer

As a lifelong resident of Fostoria and Ohio, I am honored to give testimony here today and to urge you to move forward with Senate Bill 119. Throughout the 33 years I have lived in Fostoria, out-of-state trash has had its presence in Seneca County and on the outskirts of our town. Located in Loudon Township, Sunny Farms Landfill receives an estimated 7500 tons of out-of-state waste a day by rail.

In my career working with Fortune 50 and 500 companies I have had the privilege of having a number of mentors who educated me on process improvement and the one hard fast rule that we followed was that you don't blame the person, you improve the training or the process to achieve the desired result. Right now we have let an archaic process that was created over 30 years ago stand for too long. With out-of-state trash rail fees at their current rate, we are incentivizing the transportation of hazardous construction debris to our community. The time has come to put an end to the disparities that are harming our communities and make improvements that will support those same communities and help them flourish for years to come.

In a Fostoria City Council meeting earlier this month, OSS Director Gary Baty stated that 83% of the OSS' revenue comes from Seneca County and Sunny Farms Landfill.

From their website, OSS states that its mission is "To ensure quality waste stream management for its residents and to foster long term positive solid waste habits including recycling, reducing, reusing, and buying of recycled products"

Fostoria has no recycling program. It was removed, as was Fostoria's access to Loudon Township Recycling Center. A new process has yet to be established while other communities apart of the OSS are benefiting from recycling programs that sort recyclable material.

While OSS does educate our community on recycling, without programs to support the recycling culture, our children will not see a clean future. The education is useless without action.

For more perspective, I want to share some geographic information. Sunny Farms Landfill sits at roughly 900 feet in elevation right next to the East Branch of the Portage River and Fostoria Watershed. The East branch runs north to Fostoria at roughly 720 feet in elevation and then to Lake Erie. The Landfill and the surrounding area are rich in porous limestone and the water table sits at ranges of 5-30 feet. This introduces the potential for hazardous waste to find its way downhill and into our watershed and by extension the very water we drink.

The Landfill started operations in 1970 but it was not until 2022 that it was documented as a potential risk to surface water by the Ohio EPA Surface Water Division

In a meeting in Fostoria earlier this month the Ohio EPA Surface Water Division stated that they had never tested surface water from Sunny Farms Landfill. The landfill is trusted with self-monitoring and testing.

As the father of a 5 year old, who at 6 months old was given a rare one in a million cancer diagnosis, Hepatoblastoma, I know first-hand the importance of recognizing the environment's effects on your health.

The absence of oversight and mismanagement of fees has been felt throughout our community and I ask with the most sincerity to please help us and all Ohioans by supporting SB119. Thank you.