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OHIO SENATE AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

PROPONENT TESTIMONY (WRITTEN ONLY) – HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14

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Good afternoon, Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. CCAO supports HCR 14 which urges the United States Congress to support the Great Lakes Restoration Act of 2024. CCAO believes Ohio counties will benefit greatly from the reauthorization increase to \$500 million each fiscal year over the span of five years.

From the inception of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Action Plan, \$3.7 billion has been used to restore and to protect wildlife and water quality within the Great Lakes Region. Of the \$3.7 billion, approximately \$260 million has been spent within Ohio with a focus on toxic pollution, reduced runoff from cities & farms, combatted invasive species, and restored fish and wildlife habitats.

The increased reauthorization will supplement the great work the Governor's Office has achieved through the H2Ohio Program to continue to reduce dissolved reactive phosphorus within the Western Lake Erie Basin. The GLRI has helped Ohio target four areas of concern which include the Ashtabula, Black, Cuyahoga, and Maumee Rivers. Funding received has gone towards developing agricultural best management practices, stream restoration, coastal wetlands, management of invasive species, and clean-up of contaminated sediments. Not only has dedicated funding helped improve water quality within the state, it has also had great economic impact on many counties adjacent to Lake Erie.

We thank Representatives Patton and Skindell for introducing this important resolution. CCAO urges the passage of HCR 14 and would like to thank Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and Members of the Committee, for your consideration of HCR 14.

