



City of Centerville

Brooks A. Compton, Mayor | Wayne S. Davis, City Manager

November 18, 2024

Chair O’Brien, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member DeMora and members of the Ohio Senate Local Government Committee, on behalf of the City of Montgomery, I write today to submit this testimony in opposition to House Bill 93.

The City of Centerville is dedicated to delivering reliable municipal services with a delivery model that reflects core values of accountability, integrity and responsiveness. These efforts enhance the quality of life for all who live, work, and raise families in our community while supporting our vibrant business centers and nationally-recognized public amenities. House Bill 93 jeopardizes this mission by restricting our ability to recover the costs of providing essential services, threatening the financial stability and sustainability that our residents and businesses rely upon.

House Bill 93 would restrict the tools available to municipal utilities to recover unpaid service costs, creating budget shortfalls that would ultimately hamper Centerville’s ability to deliver utility service at the high standard expected by our residents. Municipal utility systems rely on timely payment of bills from all users to maintain operational efficiency and the fiscal responsibility required of publicly budgeted activities of local government.

In 2024, total waste collection assessments are expected to generate \$36,151.20, a small yet significant portion of the \$1.9 million in total waste collection revenue. When payments are not made, the resulting revenue gaps are necessarily filled through future rate increases, unfairly shifting the burden to those who have kept current with their billing obligations. Collection breakdowns for recent years beginning in 2020 are included in the table below:

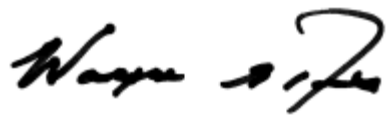
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Waste Collection Revenue	\$ 1,450,323.00	\$ 1,472,409.00	\$ 1,432,849.00	\$ 1,864,798.00	\$ 1,900,000.00
Total Waste Collection Assessments	\$ 46,867.91	\$ 23,350.29	\$ 15,919.28	\$ 14,800.28	\$ 36,151.20
Assessment as % of Total Revenue	3.23%	1.59%	1.11%	0.79%	1.90%

The existing method of certifying unpaid utility bills to the county auditor as special assessments is both efficient and equitable. This practice ensures that municipalities can recover costs while minimizing disruptions to essential services. Removing or restricting this tool, as proposed by House Bill 93, would force municipalities to rely on less effective and more costly collection methods, such as court actions or third-party collection agencies. These methods place a greater financial strain on the local utility and, by extension, the ratepayers.

Additionally, House Bill 93 introduces duplicative administrative processes by granting customers the ability to escalate billing disputes to the Environmental Review Appeals Commission. This added layer of bureaucracy would create confusion and unnecessary costs for both the municipality and state agencies, diverting resources from more pressing community needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. The City of Centerville respectfully requests that the

committee protect the ability of municipal utilities to effectively serve their communities and reconsider the provisions House Bill 93 which fail to support home rule authority over municipal utility services.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne Davis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wayne" being more legible than the last name "Davis".

Wayne Davis, City Manager