

Dontavious Jarrells

State Representative
1st House District



Monica Robb Blasdel

State Representative
79th House District

Re: HB307 Sponsor Testimony

Good morning!

Chair Hoops, Vice-Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and members of the House Development Committee. I am proud to be here today alongside my Joint Sponsor, Representative Jarrells, to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 307 – The Lead Line Replacement Act.

This legislation aims to keep our communities safe and healthy, by implementing a comprehensive regulatory framework to plan, execute, and assist in the replacement of all lead water lines in the State of Ohio.

Lead water lines are a relic of the past, however, despite the danger we know these facilities present, they are still in use all across our state. The data on this issue is clear, no amount of lead exposure is safe for our children, and the key to avoiding dangerous exposure is to prevent the consumption and inhalation of lead particles.

Across Ohio, there are an estimated 745,000 lead service lines. Replacing each of these will be a challenging task but one we firmly believe is attainable. This bill would mandate local water providers to work with the state to identify these lines, develop a plan to replace these lines with safe alternatives, and execute this plan over a 15-year period. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will be responsible for the establishment and oversight of this program, and we are confident in their ability to enact the mandate this legislation will create.

An undertaking of this size will require the full co-operation and human capital, that our government officials and utility partners have to offer, but we are sure, this effort is a responsible and worthwhile one. Lead service line replacement is a smart investment for the state, which will provide an estimated return of \$32 to \$45 dollars for every one dollar invested. Moreover, we have a moral obligation to fix the known problem that confronts us.

As Americans, and Ohioans, we strive to achieve the unwritten but universally acknowledged goal, to provide a better life for our children. This legislation is a bold step toward that goal.

I am grateful for the work of Rep. Jarrells and our partners here today, and I look forward to moving this bill through the legislative process for the benefit of all Ohioans.

With that, thank you all for your attention today and we would be happy to answer your questions.