



IRON STRONG

Testimony of Tom Crawford
Vice President and General Manager, McWane Ductile Ohio
Proponent Testimony – House Bill 284
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Chairman, Vice Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the House Development Committee, my name is Tom Crawford, and I reside in Coshocton, Ohio. I am the Vice President and General Manager of McWane Ductile Ohio, a proud manufacturer of Ductile iron pipe and poles, located about 75 miles from here in Coshocton. I am honored to appear before you today to offer my strong support for Ohio House Bill 284, legislation that will strengthen Ohio's economy, bolster our manufacturing sector, and ensure that taxpayer dollars are invested in American jobs and products.

McWane Ductile Ohio has been a cornerstone of the Coshocton community since 1910. For over a century, our facility has manufactured critical infrastructure materials—the very pipes that deliver clean water to homes and businesses, and poles that support our state's electrical grids. We are not just a manufacturer; we are a vital part of the fabric of Coshocton and indeed, the entire state of Ohio.

Our Coshocton plant is truly unique, serving as the *only* Ductile iron pipe and poles foundry in the Midwest. We currently employ 600 hard-working Ohioans. These are high-quality, family-sustaining jobs that contribute significantly to our local and state economies. Our annual payroll exceeds \$35 million, and we inject over \$40 million annually into the local economy through expenditures on goods and services. Overall, McWane Ductile Ohio generates more than \$100 million in annual economic impact.

We are also committed to sustainability, purchasing approximately 125,000 tons of scrap metal each year in the local area, making us one of the Midwest's leading recyclers. In the past seven years, we have invested over \$75 million in capital expansion projects, including a recent \$50 million investment to expand our operations, creating 50 new jobs and retaining over 100 existing ones. Our dedication extends beyond our factory walls; we are proud to contribute approximately \$100,000 annually to local charitable causes, and our recent \$500,000 investment in the McWane River Walk demonstrates our deep commitment to the community we call home.

Ohio House Bill 284, which provides a preference for the use of U.S.-produced iron and steel on state-funded projects, is an investment in Ohio's future. It is a critical piece of legislation that will deliver tangible benefits to Ohio manufacturers and the entire State of Ohio, including:

- *Strengthening Ohio's Manufacturing Base and Promoting Economic Growth:* By prioritizing American-made iron and steel, the bill ensures that taxpayer dollars are reinvested in our state's factories and industries, supporting jobs and fostering economic growth within Ohio.
- *Enhancing Supply Chain Security:* Relying on domestic production for critical infrastructure products reduces our vulnerability to global supply chain disruptions and geopolitical uncertainties.
- *Ensuring Quality and Reliability:* Ohio manufacturers adhere to rigorous quality and environmental standards, ensuring that our state's infrastructure is built with the highest quality materials, leading to more durable and safer projects.
- *Maximizing the Impact of Taxpayer Dollars:* When state capital funds are used to purchase American-made iron and steel, those dollars recirculate within our state and national economies. This creates a powerful multiplier effect, as wages are earned, spent, and reinvested in Ohio communities.

This bill is especially important for Ohio manufacturers, like McWane Ductile, because it will directly increase the demand for iron and steel products made in Ohio. By ensuring that Ohio's infrastructure projects—from water and sewer systems to bridges and public buildings—utilize American iron and steel, HB 284 will reinforce Ohio manufacturers as reliable and essential suppliers for the state's most important projects.

In conclusion, Ohio House Bill 284 is more than just a procurement policy; it is a strategic investment in Ohio's economic resilience, its manufacturing strength, and the prosperity of its communities. We at McWane Ductile Ohio stand ready to provide the high-quality, American-made, Iron Strong products necessary to build and maintain our infrastructure here in Ohio and the rest of our nation.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support Ohio House Bill 284.