



Interested Party Testimony on HB 307, the Lead Line Replacement Act
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Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and esteemed members of the House Development Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 307, the Lead Line Replacement Act. The Environmental Policy Innovation Center (EPIC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing faster, scalable environmental progress through research, policy analysis, technical assistance, and collaboration. Our work is focused on expanding access to safe, reliable, and affordable water infrastructure, with a particular emphasis on accelerating the replacement of lead service lines.

With an [estimated 800,000](#) lead service lines, the third highest total in the nation, Ohio faces a serious challenge. Three Ohio cities—Cleveland, Toledo, and Cincinnati—rank among the top ten in the U.S. for the largest concentrations of lead service lines, leaving thousands of families at risk of exposure to lead in drinking water. Even at very low levels, lead can impair children’s development and cause lasting health problems, while also undermining educational outcomes, workforce productivity, and overall community well-being.

House Bill 307 removes [critical barriers](#) to lead service line replacement identified by EPIC’s research. These include uncertainty about whether water systems can legally distribute costs across ratepayers and whether they can access private property to replace the privately owned portion of a line. This bill resolves these issues by clarifying that water systems can spread costs among the ratepayer base and by permitting property access with prior notice. Additionally, this legislation strengthens public health protections by prohibiting partial replacements, which can temporarily increase lead levels in drinking water.

By establishing a 15-year statewide timeline for identifying and replacing all lead service lines, this bill provides communities and water systems the regulatory certainty needed for effective, multiyear planning, particularly amid regulatory uncertainty at the federal level due to ongoing litigation. EPIC’s research highlights strategies to improve [cost-efficiencies](#), but adopting these [best practices](#) for lead service line replacement requires regulatory certainty as well as a reasonable planning window. The regulatory certainty and other foundations provided by House Bill 307 not only empower water systems to invest in replacing lead service lines to protect public



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health, these measures also enable **water systems to stretch each dollar invested, reducing costs to Ohio ratepayers and taxpayers.**

While the cost of replacing lead service lines throughout Ohio is substantial, estimated to cost \$5 billion dollars, evidence suggests that the cost of inaction is greater. A recent [analysis](#) by Scioto Analysis found that full lead service line replacement yields significant public health and economic benefits, with an estimated return on investment of \$32 to \$45 for every dollar spent. Over the 15-year timeline envisioned in this legislation, Ohio could see as much as \$145 to \$185 billion in economic gains through improved health outcomes, higher lifetime earnings, and reduced healthcare and social service costs.

House Bill 307 enhances public health protections, removes key barriers to lead service line replacement, and enables communities and water systems to plan and implement replacement programs.

Sincerely,

Erica Galante-Johnson

Senior Policy Analyst, Lead Service Line Replacement

Environmental Policy Innovation Center