

Testimony of Jon Cross

*Former Ohio State Representative & Advocate for the Ohio Association of Radon Professionals
Before the Ohio House of Representatives Health Committee*

March 5, 2025

RE: Addressing Radon Safety in Ohio Schools: A Call for Action and Support

Chairman Schmidt, Vice Chairman Deeter, Ranking Member Somani and members of the Ohio House Health Committee,

My name is Jon Cross, and I am here today as a professional advocate for the Ohio Association of Radon Professionals. I stand here today with representatives from the OARP and urge you to consider the safety of Ohio's students, teachers, and school staff by addressing the presence of radon in our school buildings.

As you may know, radon is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless radioactive gas that can pose a significant health risk. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, after smoking, and is present in many parts of Ohio due to the state's geology. As a former State Representative, I worked extensively on raising awareness about the dangers of radon, including spearheading efforts that led to the passage of Ohio House Bill 106 during the 134th General Assembly. This bill was a major step forward in increasing radon awareness and ensuring Ohioans understand the importance of testing for radon in their homes and workplaces.

Despite these efforts, many of Ohio's school buildings, which serve hundreds of thousands of students, teachers, and staff, have not been tested for radon. With approximately 3,700 school buildings across the state, of which 1,725 school buildings are in EPA Zone 1 (see attached map), this is a serious concern. The potential exposure of our school communities to radon gas is an issue that must be addressed to protect public health.

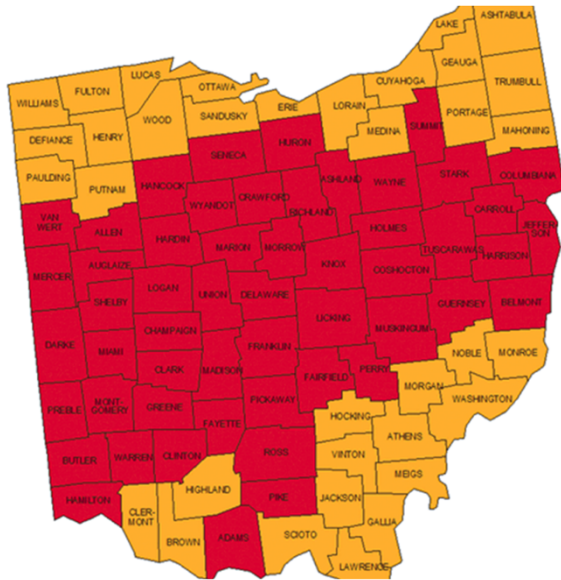
The cost of radon testing for a single school building ranges from \$4,000 to \$6,000, which presents a financial barrier for many school districts, especially those in low-income areas. Without proper testing, these schools may unknowingly expose their occupants to elevated radon levels.

To address this issue, I am urging you to support a budget amendment to HB96 that would allocate \$15 million in grant funding to assist school districts in testing their buildings for radon. This funding would provide much-needed financial support to schools, allowing them to conduct the necessary testing and take corrective actions to mitigate radon exposure if necessary.

Radon testing in schools is a critical public health measure. By funding this initiative, Ohio can ensure that our children, educators, and staff are not unknowingly exposed to a deadly carcinogen. The safety of our students and school staff must be our top priority, and we must act now to make sure all schools are safe, healthy places for learning.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter, and I respectfully ask for your support of this important budget amendment to HB96 to help protect Ohio's school communities.

Sincerely,
Jon Cross



Radon Hot Zones

EPA Zone Map

Zone 1, 2 3

Ohio only has Zone 1 and 2

- Zone 1- Statistically 55% or more of the buildings will have elevated levels of radon gas.
- Zone 2- Statistically 40% or more of the buildings in these counties will have elevated radon levels.



Ohio Schools Districts Impacted by Elevated Radon Levels

Granville Exempted Village Schools – Licking County – Reported Levels of 14.3 pCi/L

Heath City Schools – Licking County – Reported Levels of 15.3 pCi/L

North Canton City – Stark County – Reported levels 10.0 pCi/L

Tuscarawas County BDD – Tuscarawas County – Reported levels of 36.3 pCi/L

Cleveland Charter School – Cuyahoga County – Reported Levels of 7.6 pCi/L

National Trails Charter School – Preble County – Reported Levels of 7.5 pCi/L

Stuebenville City Schools – Jefferson County- Reported Levels of 10.3 pCi/L

Kent City Schools – Portage County – Reported Levels of 14.2 pCi/L

Norwalk School District – Huron County- Reported Levels of 8.2 pCi/L



Radon in Ohio

Ohio has historically high levels of Radon.

88 Counties Total

53- Zone 1

35 – Zone 2

0- Zone 3

Franklin and Licking counties have some of the highest radon levels in the state.