

March 31, 2025

RE: SUPPORT for HB 139, Require specified testing of fire hydrant systems

Chair King & Members of the House Local Government Committee,

Representing nearly 70 percent of the U.S. property casualty insurance market, the American Property Casualty Insurance Association (APCIA) promotes and protects the viability of private competition for the benefit of consumers and insurers. APCIA represents the broadest cross-section of home, auto, and business insurers of any national trade association. In Ohio, APCIA's members write more than \$15.8 billion in property and casualty insurance premiums. We respectfully submit the following comments in **SUPPORT of HB 139**.

HB 139 represents a logical approach to ensuring functional public safety infrastructure by applying simple, yet effective best practices. By requiring the State Fire Marshal to ensure the inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire hydrants, HB 139 will ensure the reliability of these systems during the emergencies when they are needed.

For insurance underwriting purposes, many companies evaluate and consider a community's fire protection systems, including water supply. Within the water supply evaluation, factors such as hydrant size, type, installation, and the frequency and completeness of hydrant inspection and flow-testing programs are measured. HB 139 will be particularly beneficial for rural communities where lack of inspections and subsequent maintenance issues can undermine the reliability of fire hydrant systems. The results of House Bill 139 will not just ensure the reliability of these systems but will also ensure Ohio communities are appropriately prepared for any fire situations.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our support and urge the committee to vote "**YES**" on **HB 139**. Please feel to contact me or APCIA's local counsel Steve Buehrer if we can answer any questions or be of assistance.

Respectfully,

Joe Roth
Assistant Vice President, State Government Relations
American Property Casualty Insurance Association