



Chair Jones, Vice Chair Blasdel, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the committee—thank you for the opportunity to present House Bill 49, which authorizes the creation of Water and Wastewater Improvement Districts (WIDs). This bill is designed to address a critical need for the efficient and effective development of water and wastewater infrastructure in Ohio, particularly in regions experiencing significant growth, such as Central Ohio.

The concept of a WID is intended to function in much the same way that a Transportation Improvement District (TID) governs transportation issues. In fact, most of your counties are already familiar with TIDs, which have successfully helped manage transportation projects in a cooperative, streamlined manner. This bill will mirror that framework, allowing counties to establish WIDs with a clear and organized structure as outlined in the legislation.

This bill is designed to be permissive—meaning Boards of County Commissioners will have the option to create WIDs if they deem it necessary for their respective counties. Once established, these districts will help facilitate the acquisition of state and federal funding, foster public-private partnerships, and assist in resolving disputes between political subdivisions concerning water and wastewater infrastructure projects.

I want to emphasize the need for this legislation, particularly in light of the rapid and expansive development that my own county is experiencing. Local officials there have expressed strong support for this bill in several interested party meetings, and they believe it is essential to implement this tool as soon as possible to keep pace with the growing infrastructure demands.

Ohio, and especially Central Ohio, is undergoing significant development, and House Bill 49 is an important step toward ensuring that we have a coordinated, efficient approach to developing vital infrastructure. Water and wastewater projects are at the forefront of this challenge, and this legislation will provide local governments with the necessary tools to meet these needs in a timely and effective manner.

I respectfully ask for your support in advancing this important legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.