



Ohio Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

S.B. No 147 – Proponent Testimony

March 25, 2025

**To: Chair Schaffer, Vice Chair Koehler, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson,
and members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:**

My name is Anthony Paradiso, a Seneca County Commissioner. On behalf of the Seneca County Commissioners, I am here today to provide proponent testimony in support of SB 147. This bill is 114 pages. I wish to focus my comments on the ability for a government entity to withdraw from an existing multi-county district.

As commissioners, we are elected to represent all the people in our county. It is frustrating to be in a position where we need to make a critical decision in our county, but our hands are tied.

Seneca County is part of a three-county solid waste management district known as Ottawa, Sandusky, Seneca Solid Waste Management District or OSS. The governing board of OSS is made up of three county commissioners from each county for a total of nine voting members.

In the OSS district, there are two landfills. A local landfill in Ottawa County and Win Waste Innovations of Seneca County, a very large landfill that brings in approximately 96% of its trash by rail from out-of-state. Yes, 96% of what is being dumped in our county comes from the East Coast. OSS received approximately 6% of its budget from the fees collected from the Ottawa County landfill and approximately 94% of its budget from the fees collected from Win Waste. Sandusky County has no landfills in its county.

Over the last few years, we have asked the OSS board several times to provide more financial assistance to our local Board of Health to ensure necessary resources to monitor the very large and growing landfill in our county.

Our requests have been reduced considerably. We currently receive \$100k per year above what the other counties receive.

Any reasonable person will understand that our county is being negatively impacted by this landfill. You would think that asking for resources to help monitor and provide oversight over the landfill would not be so challenging.

Things have changed this past year. On September 9th, 2024, the landfill was approved and permitted to expand by more than 26%.

Subsequently our Board of County Commissioners made the decision and passed a resolution last year on November 14th, 2024 withdrawal from the multi-county solid waste district or OSS. As we all expected, the other two counties each voted 3-0 to deny our request to withdraw.

As a legislator, we want you to know that the current law doesn't allow our county to exit the multi-county district on our own. **It takes approval by all counties in the district.** (not a majority)

The current law lacks local control; it is outdated and needs changed. With many other public bodies in Ohio, the law allows a county to join a multi-county district or exit a multi-county district.

Regional districts are common in Ohio. I will provide an example that occurred recently in the Ohio Legislature. Just four years ago, Erie County was approved to split from the Ottawa-Erie County mental health board.

Our local mental health and recovery services board was a three-county district. In 2021, it accepted Ottawa County to join the three-county district, creating a four-county district which exists today. Erie County was happy, and Ottawa County was presented with an opportunity that was beneficial to them.

Ohio Revised Code Section 340.01 allows and gives authority to a county to enter or exit a mental health board district, which includes creating their own district or merging into another district. During this process this code was clarified and updated a few times in the past four years to give authority to local county commissioners and to specify the requirements for an exit plan and/or for a potential new merger.

You, the legislators, understood the importance of providing local control for such districts to the county commissioners. You, the legislators, amended and approved this code.

We are asking you to do the same here. Give authority to the local counties to write their own destiny. County commissioners are responsible for representing the interests of the county and are elected by the residents of the county. Whether or not Seneca County decides to remain part of the current solid waste district, this bill would provide a fundamental right that should be available not just for Seneca County, but for all other counties in Ohio.

Ohio is a local control state- please give the authority to the local government to decide. Nothing will change without legislative action. Thus, The Seneca County Commissioners are in full support of S.B. 147 and I ask you to please vote yes and support this legislation. We simply need your help.

It is very difficult as a county commissioner to tell your constituents that you are part of a regional district, but you have limited authority over the funds that are generated from Seneca County and the services that are being funded or implemented in Seneca County when you generate over 94% of the income and have the burden of providing oversight of the landfill.

As a last note, I would like to let you know that a similar bill passed the Senate in the last general assembly 30-0. Many of you voted YES on that piece of legislation, both republicans and democrats. That was SB 119. It didn't make it to the finish line in the House; however, Senator Reineke took in all the feedback received during the last general assembly and of course has reintroduced SB 147, a similar bill.

I am asking you to please support SB 147 and vote YES.

Thank you,

Anthony J. Paradiso, Seneca County Commissioner

