



Senate Bill 147
Interested Party Testimony
Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
April 1, 2025

Chair Schaffer, Vice Chair Koehler, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on Senate Bill 147. My name is Greg Kesterman, and I serve as Hamilton County Health Commissioner.

The Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC) represents the 111 local health districts in Ohio. Local health districts (LHD) are responsible for preventing illness, promoting wellness, and protecting against the spread of disease in each of your communities. AOHC is committed to providing leadership and advocacy to assist local health districts in fulfilling these responsibilities.

In coordination with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA), LHDs are tasked with enforcing Ohio's laws and regulations on solid waste, infectious waste, and construction and demolition debris and we are also involved in licensing and inspecting of solid waste disposal facilities, including landfills and transfer stations.

In Ohio, there are 62 licensed transfer facilities and 37 licensed municipal solid waste landfills. Transfer stations are facilities where municipal solid waste is temporarily held and sorted before heading to a landfill.

Waste management companies currently pay fees based on the facility type—transfer or landfill—and material type—solid waste, construction and demolition debris (C&DD), or a combination. The collection and distribution of these fees are also based on the facility and type of material. Currently, construction waste disposed of at a solid waste landfill is subject to a lower fee than other solid waste. This often results in a misclassification of waste due to the desire to have waste classified at a lower fee category when the waste may be a mixture of solid waste and construction debris.

We appreciate Senator Reineke's work over the last several years not only to address landfill issues specific to his district but also to address the fee structure. We would like to acknowledge the DeWine Administration's proposal in House Bill 96 which also addresses the fee structure and provides additional resources to local health departments. AOHC has testified in support of the Administration's proposal in the House.

Ultimately, AOHC supports changes that will result in new and/or increased funds for local health districts to manage active landfills and direct new funds to remediate abandoned

landfills and clean up open dumps. Additional funds for Ohio' solid waste management districts will also enhance the health and safety of communities.

SB 147 allows for a solid waste management district to adopt a new variable fee for C&DD to mirror the district's disposal fees for solid waste. The new fees would go to LHDs to mitigate the impacts to health, safety, and welfare.

Additional funds would also help address the issue of open dumps throughout Ohio. In many rural and less-traveled areas, individuals often choose to dispose of waste improperly rather than utilizing licensed landfills. This illegal dumping not only harms the environment but also poses health and safety risks to the community. With adequate funding, health departments across the state could play a critical role in managing and mitigating these sites, ultimately improving public health, environmental quality, and the overall well-being of our communities.

As the professionals who enforce the waste management requirements in communities across the state, we offer our experience and expertise as you consider and compare SB 147 and the proposed changes in HB 96. We look forward to working with the Senate and the House to address these issues.

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