



# OEHA

OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

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**SB 147 Interested Party Testimony**  
**Presented by Chuck DeJonckheere**  
**Ohio Environmental Health Association**  
**Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee**  
**Chairman Tim Schaffer**  
**April 1, 2025**

Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Koehler, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on SB 147 introduced by Sen. Reineke. My name is Chuck DeJonckheere, and I am testifying today on behalf of the Ohio Environmental Health Association (OEHA) as the Chair of the Solid Waste Technical Committee. Our association represents nearly 600 Registered Environmental Health Specialists—commonly called health inspectors—and other environmental health industry partners and practitioners in Ohio. As part of their duties, environmental health specialists implement Ohio's environmental health laws and rules by working with industry and the public to ensure the safety of the food we eat at restaurants and grocery stores; the water quality of swimming pools; sewage and septic issues; and other environmental health issues to ensure the health and safety of Ohioans. I am here today representing OEHA on SB 147's proposed revisions to solid waste and construction and demolition debris laws.

In Ohio, there are 65 local health departments that work as regulatory partners with the Ohio EPA in the solid and infectious waste and construction and demolition debris programs. This involves licensing and inspections of the operations at these facilities. Local health departments are boots on the ground at these facilities, investigating complaints and ensuring compliance with the rules established to protect human health and the environment. There is little to no direct funding provided for much of this work. Currently, local health departments retain just \$2,500 of a \$60,000 annual license fee for a landfill and \$750 for solid waste transfer facilities.

Landfills, while necessary, are significant sources of potential environmental hazards. This is why OEHA appreciates Sen. Reineke's efforts to provide resources to local health districts to mitigate impacts related to the Solid Waste and C&DD facilities and out-of-state waste in their communities. In addition to SB 147 there is a similar but separate proposal in HB 96, the SFY26/27 biennial budget. In that proposal, a redistribution of fees collected from solid waste and C&DD facilities would fund measures that directly address the health risks posed by these sites. OEHA also testified in the House in support of the HB 96 fee proposal as it provides more resources to local health departments. Although there are differences between the two proposals (SB 147 and HB 96), OEHA is supportive of the legislative intent as both would provide much-needed additional resources for local health departments. Additionally, construction and demolition debris and solid waste fee structures should disincentivize out-of-state waste from filling Ohio's landfills. Due to their critical role in monitoring air and water quality near landfills, local health departments need these resources to ensure their vital public health monitoring activities are supported and enhanced which could result in earlier identification of contamination risks and swift actions to mitigate any issues in order to better protect the health of the public and our communities.

In conclusion, directing fees collected from landfills to benefit local health departments is sound public policy, a prudent financial decision, and would be a pivotal support to better safeguard the health of the public and the environment in communities where these facilities are located. It is an investment in the well-being of our communities, fostering safer and healthier living conditions for Ohio's residents.

Once again, Chairman Schaffer and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on SB 147. I am happy to answer any questions you have at this time.