



Nicholas Homrighausen- Proponent Testimony on Senate Bill 219

Chairman Chavez, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for allowing me to testify in support of Senate Bill 219.

My name is Nicholas Homrighausen, and I am the Executive Director of Community & Economic Development for Harrison County. Harrison County is the 5th least populated county in Ohio, however we are small but mighty as you will hear me discuss momentarily. Senate Bill 219 provides important updates to Ohio's oil and gas laws which will allow the industry to continue developing and contributing to Harrison County economy.

Since the beginning of the Shale Revolution, investment from oil and natural gas has brought in [over \\$100 billion](#)¹ to the state – critical money that helps boost economic development in the state and more specifically Harrison County. Oil and gas plays a key role in our county.

Anyone that takes a short drive through Harrison County can see the direct result of Oil & Gas renaissance.

We have four processing plants and numerous pipelines that all intersect Harrison County, which makes it grand central station of shipping in gas, processing it, and shipping it out. In addition, we have potential underground storage in the salt vein that begins under our great natural resource Lake Erie through Harrison County to the river that will allow us to store hydrocarbons to compete globally.

Per a Wall Street Journal article from March 2019, Harrison County was identified as the fastest-growing local economy in Ohio and number four in the nation at that time. The county recorded a 129.5% gross domestic product growth rate from 2012 to 2015, and a GDP amount of \$732.2 million.²

Wall St. 24/7 used Bureau of Labor Statistics employment data to analyze and identify the fastest-growing industry in each state, and information from the Bureau of Economic Analysis to calculate the change in real GDP during that time period.

Harrison County sits at the northeast hub of the U.S. petrochemical industry and has seen tremendous economic growth in the past several years.

¹ <https://www.energyindepth.org/new-report-ohio-shale-industry-cumulative-investment-surpasses-100-billion/>

² <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2019/02/19/fastest-growing-local-economy-in-every-state-2/>



The industry has provided new jobs, an improved infrastructure and an increase in tax revenues to the county. Between 2010 and 2015, \$11 million in taxes were generated in Harrison County, and \$31.4 million was spent to build or improve 54.75 miles of road.³

Most recently, it was announced that the new Pre -K -12 school 30-year bond will be paid off almost 30 years early. The Harrison Hills City School District Board of Education has approved a financial strategy to pay off the district's building bond in full by 2027, nearly three decades ahead of schedule.

The plan calls for a \$18.5 million payment this fiscal year followed by a final payment of \$7.4 million next year. The decision was made during the board's July meeting and reflects a focus on fiscal responsibility and reducing the tax burden for Harrison County residents.

The district's operating fund is supported heavily by public utility tax revenue, which has grown along with the gas and oil industry in Harrison County. That strong base, officials said, allows debt reduction without sacrificing future programming.

The action continues a trend of tax relief for local residents. In 2015, taxpayers supported a 3-mill permanent improvement levy and a 4.48-mill bond levy. By 2025, the bond levy rate had fallen to 1.7 mills.⁴

These are just a few positive examples of how the oil and gas industry is providing and driving growth in our small county, and the Eastern Ohio region not seen since the Industrial Revolution.

That is why I ask that we update Ohio's oil and gas laws and regulations to temper with the economic realities of today and not yesteryear to continue these successes.

We are encouraged by Senator Landis and this bill and urge swift passage of Senate Bill 219 by the committee. Thank you and I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.

³ <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2019/02/19/fastest-growing-local-economy-in-every-state-2/>

⁴ www.newsbreak.com/share/4297101873524-harrison-hills-board-to-retire-school-bond-by-2027