

Chair Rogner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and members of the Senate General Government Committee.

I'm Carolyn Harding and I oppose SB 153.

I'm a Central Ohio citizen who has been working to protect Columbus' drinking water from toxic, radioactive frack waste dumping within our watershed.

It certainly is odd that Ohio citizens have no say regarding oil & gas pollution coming into their communities impacting the safety of their drinking water, air and soil.

Strategically industry-led template laws, passed by state legislators, pre-empt municipalities from exercising their home rule right to protect their community from oil & gas drilling and waste disposal.

What's a citizen to do, when our representatives create law that favors a polluting industry over the well being of an Ohio citizens and communities? In Ohio, concerned citizens turn to Ohio's hard-won Home Rule right to initiate and referendum law through citizen-led ballot initiatives.

I've co-organized four municipal ballot initiatives regarding frack waste disposal within our watershed with the all volunteer group, the Columbus Community Bill of Rights. And it's difficult to fulfill all the requirements to get an initiative on the ballot: First the initiative language has to be approved; Second, thousands to hundreds of thousands of valid Ohio voter signatures must be collected and counted; (3) and if all goes well and the initiative is placed on the ballot, corporate and monied interests dollars can overpower the hard work of the initiative organizers & workers.

And now SB 153, would make it more difficult and dangerous for Ohioans to exercise our Home Rule right to initiate or repeal law via citizen-led ballot initiatives and referendums. Home Rule is good for both sides of the aisle. Vote No on SB 153.