



State Representative Mark Johnson

District 92

State Representative Monica Robb Blasdel

District 79

Chair Wilkin, Vice Chair Reineke, ranking member DeMora, members of the Senate Public Utilities Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 227.

This legislation comes directly from the Ohio Underground Damage Prevention Coalition — a group of professionals committed to keeping our workers, our infrastructure, and our communities safe.

House Bill 227 makes three simple but important improvements:

First, it adjusts the excavation notification timeline to give utilities a *true* 48 hours — two working days — to respond to notices, ensuring safer and more coordinated work in the field.

Second, it updates the definition of “excavation” so Ohio can once again qualify for federal safety grant funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation. These funds support programs that prevent accidents and protect vital underground assets.

And third, it cleans up outdated references in the law, removing obsolete language that no longer applies to today’s industry.

I'm proud to share that House Bill 227 passed the **House Commerce and Labor Committee unanimously, with 13 yeas and 0 nays**. That strong bipartisan support speaks volumes about the value and practicality of this legislation. I respectfully ask for your support of House Bill 227 so we can continue protecting our workers, our infrastructure, and our communities.

In closing, this bill makes three changes that will ensure underground assets, and the citizens that reside near them, benefit from a safe and reliable excavation process. I would like to thank the committee for your attention to this matter and we'd be happy to answer your questions.