



Protecting nature. Preserving life.

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2

February 21, 2017

The Honorable Troy Balderson, Chair
Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Senate Building, Room 040
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Balderson:

The Nature Conservancy is a non-partisan, science-based organization that seeks to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. Established in Ohio in 1959, we work collaboratively with businesses, farmers, sportsmen groups, government and local communities to develop pragmatic, market-based solutions to conservation challenges. More than 55,000 Ohioans are Nature Conservancy supporters.

The Nature Conservancy in Ohio is supportive of Senate Bill 2 sponsored by Senator Cliff Hite and would request the inclusion of the language (see attached) included in SB 333 of the 131st General Assembly related to the prevention of Aquatic Invasive Species. This language was agreed upon by Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and addresses another provision included in the Binational Water Quality Agreement to harmonize state and provincial aquatic invasive species approaches and regulations. Senate Bill 2 is important to the health of Ohio's surface and drinking water. Among the key provisions we support are:

- Refocusing of Lake Erie Commission efforts to identify and track efforts toward the 40% phosphorus reduction in the Western basin by 2025
- Providing safe options for reuse of dredge material from Lake Erie harbors and;
- Strengthening Ohio's Certified Water Quality Professional Program by including a multi-sector work group

We appreciate your favorable consideration of SB 2 and our small amendment request. We are available for any questions you, the committee members or staff may have. Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tracy S. Freeman".

Tracy S. Freeman
Director of Government Relations

cc: The Honorable Cliff Hite
Craig Butler, Director, Ohio EPA
James Zehringer, Director, Ohio DNR

SB 2 Requested Amendment on ODNR Aquatic Invasive Species Policy (previously approved as part of SB 333 from the 131st GA) 2/21/17

Sec. 1533.06.

Not later than one year after the effective date of this section, the chief of the division of wildlife shall establish all of the following:

(A) A risk assessment policy for aquatic species that provides for both of the following:

(1) An evaluation of the overall risk of a species based on the best available biological information derived from professionally accepted science and practices in fisheries or aquatic invasive species management;

(2) A determination of whether a species shall be listed as an injurious aquatic invasive species.

(B) A definition of injurious invasive aquatic species;

The chief shall adopt rules under section 1531.10 of the Revised Code that are necessary to administer this section.