



Representative Scott Wiggam

1<sup>st</sup> House District

Chairman Koehler, Vice Chair Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 464.

This bill would eliminate the requirement that a public water system demonstrate the technical, managerial, and financial capability to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Law through implementation of an asset management program. These businesses are already complying with that directive, so this program is not needed. It would also require the Director of Ohio EPA to rescind any rules implementing the asset management program within 30 days.

Under current law, all public water system must demonstrate the capabilities of their system to comply with the Ohio Safe Drinking Water Law through the asset management program.

The water asset management program is an unnecessary burden and an overregulation of small, privately owned businesses. The asset management program requires businesses to include a description of internal contracting and purchasing procedures to accomplish routine and emergency repairs and replacements. It also requires businesses to identify the funds that will be allocated for those repairs and replacements.

Additionally, the Director of the Ohio EPA has been granted sweeping powers against those who are in non-compliance with the program. The penalties include a fine for each violation (each day in non-compliance is a new violation) up to \$25,000 and criminal penalties up to 4 years imprisonment. The Ohio EPA Director also has the discretion to suspend or revoke a license to a public waterway system.

Privately owned businesses should not have to submit proprietary financial and budgeting information to the state of Ohio and the Ohio EPA. The EPA Director should not have so much authority as to close a business and refuse its reopening.

The Ohio EPA needs to end this burden on small businesses and this bill does exactly that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for allowing me to give testimony on this important issue today. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

