



**OHIO SOYBEAN
ASSOCIATION**

918 Proprietors Road, Suite A, Worthington, OH 43085
614-476-3100 | 888-SOY-OHIO | www.soyohio.org

**Ohio House of Representatives
Agriculture & Conservation Committee
House Bill 385 – Written Only Testimony
Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

Chairman Koehler, Vice-Chair Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the Ohio House Agriculture and Conservation Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony for House Bill 385. This bill would prohibit municipal corporations with the Western Basin of Lake Erie from discharging any amount of waste into Ohio waters.

My name is Kirk Merritt and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Soybean Association and Ohio Soybean Council. I'm providing testimony today on behalf of the Ohio Soybean Association (OSA) and its members. OSA is a member-driven, grassroots organization dedicated to improving the business climate for Ohio soybean farmers by providing leadership and advocating for sound soybean policy at the state and national levels. As the sixth-largest soybean producing state, soybeans are an important part of Ohio's economy. Soybeans are Ohio's largest crop by acreage and largest export crop. The industry employs more than 30,000 people and generates more than \$5.3 billion in economic activity annually.

OSA and the Ohio Soybean Council (OSC), Ohio's soybean checkoff organization, understand the importance of water quality in relation to agricultural production. For many years, we have actively engaged industry stakeholders and farmers about the problems facing Ohio's lakes. Ohio's soybean farmers have shown their commitment to being part of the solution by investing their own checkoff dollars in research.

House Bill 385 could help address some of the water quality challenges that Lake Erie faces. Over the past several years, Ohio's General Assembly have made investments in farms/agricultural through H2Ohio funding. House Bill 385 could be another tool in the toolbox to address water quality issues.

We thank Representative Cross for his attention to this issue and hope that we can continue to work with members of the General Assembly for water quality solutions for both agriculture, municipalities in the Western Basin of Lake Erie and beyond.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide any more information or answer any questions.

Kirk Merritt
Executive Director, Ohio Soybean Association