

**Committees:**

Higher Education, *Ranking Member*  
Primary & Secondary Education  
Economic & Workforce Development



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# CATHERINE D. INGRAM

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State Representative  
32<sup>nd</sup> House District

**Sponsor Testimony - House Primary & Secondary Education Committee – Nov. 15, 2022**

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 245.

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and the rising cost of commodities, many Ohioans struggle with paying their utility bills. Water & Sewer rates across Ohio have increased, leaving Ohio's most vulnerable population subject to reevaluating how they will be able to keep up with the cost. HB 245 aims to protect these Ohioans, especially folks over the age of 65, low and moderate-income persons, and those experiencing temporary hardship.

Currently the discounted rate or charges to water & sewer services may be provided to persons who are 65 years or older and who meet eligibility requirements established by the board. HB 245 would expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates, charges, or rate reductions per the respective board of county commissioners permitted to establish under continuing law, for anyone who meets the following criteria:

- 65 years of age or older;
- Low- and moderate income persons;
- Experiencing temporary hardship.

This expansion would move to include individuals and families who qualify as low and moderate income persons as established by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency.

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, again I thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 245. I will be happy to answer any questions at this time.