



House Bill 207
Testimony of
Duane Stansbury, REHS, MPH
Health Commissioner, Warren County Health District
on behalf of
Association of Ohio Health Commissioners
June 5, 2024

Chairman Mathews, Vice Chairman Stewart, Ranking Member Liston and members of the House Public Health Policy Committee, my name is Duane Stansbury, and I am speaking to you today on behalf of the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners, the statewide association representing Ohio's local health districts and the millions of Ohioans whose health we protect.

Thank you for allowing me to speak in support of House Bill 207. This bill will clarify the roles of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) as it relates to inspecting special use pools and aquatic amusement rides. These two state agencies play critical but separate roles regarding special use pools and amusement rides. These agencies have the goals of protecting the public's health and protecting the physical safety of the public.

Until recently, special use pools and aquatic amusement rides were considered separate types of facilities and were consequently licensed differently. Special use pools were regulated by ODH because they have the training and expertise in water borne diseases, the major concern of pools. And amusement rides were regulated by ODA because they have the training and expertise in ride safety.

However, a few years ago, these two different forms of amusement were combined into aquatic rides. This new form of amusement has increased activity and exercise of children and families in Ohio and across the US. Today millions of people enjoy this form of entertainment and exercise all year round.

Unfortunately, the Ohio Revised Code has not kept pace with this new industry. It requires expertise from both ODH and ODA. HB 207 will allow both state agencies to use the education and training they have developed over decades, to keep our children and families Healthy and Safe. Revising the existing code will prevent one agency from having to learn new professional skills and expertise that are already possessed by the other agency. And that is what is in the best interest for the health and safety of Ohio families.

Also, this is not creating a new regulation or burden for the waterparks. They are already required to meet health and safety standards. Instead, it is ensuring these responsibilities remain with the experts that have always been responsible for them. This will ensure that the highest trained experts in Ohio can protect the health and safety of our children and families at these entertainment facilities. We want to ensure that Ohioans can safely enjoy aquatic amusement rides and public pools. I believe that House Bill 207 will make that happen.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to any questions you may have.

Contact Information:

Duane Stansbury

dstansbury@wcchd.com

513.509.5030