



WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION
COMMITTEE

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

HB 175

May 4, 2021

Chair Koehler, Vice Chair Creech, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to write in support of HB 175.

HB 175 would remove existing barriers to local economic development in Ohio's communities by removing ephemeral streams from the definition of "Waters of the State."

The bill would allow entities involved in land development to authorize their professional engineers to use best management practices (BMPs) to increase storability in the watersheds during a rain event. This would replace the Ohio EPA's General Permit requirement, which currently mandates the replacement and creation of additional ephemeral streams. Additionally, the Ohio EPA currently has a fee structure in place regarding ephemeral stream work that can add tens of thousands of dollars to an already costly project.

HB 175 will remove expensive bureaucratic roadblocks to critical economic development opportunities. For example, cities and villages across Ohio are struggling to incentivize the development of affordable housing in their community. Without adequate affordable housing, a municipality cannot bring the necessary workforce to a business, inhibiting a municipality's ability to attract and retain businesses. This impacts the economic health of the entire state, as 80% of businesses are located in a city or village.

We thank Representative Hillyer for recognizing the need for this legislation, and we thank you for your consideration of our position. We urge for the favorable passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Kent Scarrett
Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League