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Seneca County Board of Health Shows Support of Senate Bill 119

(Seneca County, May 25, 2023) - During a regular board meeting Thursday evening, the Seneca County Board of Health passed a resolution supporting Senate Bill 119.

The resolution was passed unanimously by the board and supports a bill that makes significant changes to existing Ohio laws and grants regulatory agencies the authority and responsibility to exercise greater oversight of landfill facilities.

The bill was recently introduced by Senator Bill Reineke in the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

“Senate Bill 119 gives Seneca County residents a voice,” said Dr. Clay Wolph, president of Seneca County Board of Health. “The Board of Health supports this bill because it allows decisions regarding landfill operations to be made in the best interest of our residents and the environment.”

According to the Seneca County Board of Health resolution, Senate Bill 119 offers a solution to challenges posed by federal Interstate Commerce law and Ohio’s concerns regarding out-of-state trash. Interstate Commerce law prevents charging higher fees for out-of-state refuse, inadvertently incentivizing other states to use Ohio as a dumping ground. Senate Bill 119 aims to remedy this issue by equalizing disposal fees regardless of the origin of the waste.

The bill also proposes changes to Solid Waste Management Districts.

Currently, Ottawa-Sandusky-Seneca Joint Solid Waste Management District collects approximately 90% of its budget from the landfill located in Seneca County. However, the allocated budget by OSS Joint Solid Waste Management District for oversight at the landfill facility is 2.4% of the district’s budget. This imbalance forces Seneca County residents to endure many of the problems associated with having a landfill, the resolution states. Furthermore, the current law does not allow Seneca County to leave the Joint Solid Waste Management District. Senate Bill 119 provides the solution for Seneca County to be able to create its own district, according to the board’s resolution.

“The Seneca County Board of Health continues to take a proactive approach in achieving its mission to promote wellness, prevent disease, protect the environment, and assure access to quality health care. We will continue in our steadfast commitment to Seneca County and all those residents that call Seneca County ‘home’,” said Dr. Zachary West, vice president of Seneca County Board of Health.

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