



## OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

6500 Taylor Road, Ste. A

Blacklick, OH 43004

Phone: (614) 863-0045 Fax: (614) 863-9751

www.OhioTownships.org

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### Senate Bill 219, Revise Oil & Gas Law House Natural Resources Committee March 18, 2026

Chairwoman Robb Blasdel, Vice Chair Fischer, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the House Natural Resources committee, my name is Kyle Brooks, and I am the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Ohio Township Association (OTA). On behalf of Ohio's 1,308 townships, thank you for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony on SB 219, Revise Oil & Gas Law.

Road Use Maintenance Agreements (RUMAs) are legal agreements between local governments and businesses that outline responsibility for road construction and repairs resulting from excessive use and damage caused by those entities' activities. Both parties recognize that existing infrastructure was not designed to withstand the type and frequency of use generated by these operations. In 2012, R.C. 1509.06 was amended to require oil and gas well operators to enter into a RUMA.

The OTA appreciates the Senate's work to continue requiring operators to enter into a RUMA. According to the most recent Ohio Department of Transportation RI-339 System Mileage Report, townships are responsible for more than 77,000 lane miles, which is nearly 40% of the total lane miles in the state and the most of any political subdivision. Without this requirement, townships will be forced to absorb the cost of repairing roads damaged by operators unwilling to enter into agreements.

The OTA recognizes that horizontal wells do not produce indefinitely. Accordingly, we **support** the language in SB 219 that places a reasonable time limit on the duration of a RUMA, provided that a RUMA remains required whenever an operator continues to use heavy equipment on township roads. We believe this provision supports continued collaboration between townships and operators.

However, I would be remiss if I did not raise a significant concern with the affidavit provision in this legislation. The bill creates an exemption for special regional heavy hauling permits when a vehicle exceeds road weight limits, so long as the permit holder has made a good faith effort to enter into a RUMA. Under this provision, the operator may file an affidavit with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources attesting to that good faith effort and, upon doing so, may proceed without a RUMA.

The bill requires no notification to the township and only requires notice to the county engineer. As a result, township officials may not know that overweight hauling is occurring on their roads until they physically observe the activity. The lack of transparency raises serious safety and infrastructure concerns. For example, townships often use RUMAs and special haul permits to coordinate hauling activity around school bus routes or to implement safety measures near bus stops. Without notice or coordination, operators could conduct heavy hauling in areas where children are present. **For these reasons, the OTA respectfully requests that the committee remove the exemption provision from the bill.**

Madam Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you and the Natural Resources Committee and I would be happy to answer any questions you or the committee members may have.