



OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Majority Communications Department

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Rep. Ginter Champions Legislation Protecting Ohioans from Lead in Drinking Water

Bill expediting public notice of lead in drinking water passes through Ohio House

COLUMBUS—The Ohio House of Representatives today voted out legislation sponsored by State Representative Tim Ginter (R-Salem) that works to protect Ohioans from lead in drinking water by updating state requirements for testing homeowners' water and expediting the process for notifying and educating the public about dangerous lead levels.

Recently an incident in Sebring, Ohio shed light on the fact that current inadequate federal guidelines allow for a 30-day public disclosure timeline after high levels of lead are detected—a response time that raised serious public health concerns. House Bill 512 shortens the timeline significantly by requiring water system operators to disclose test results to homeowners within two business days. If test results show unacceptable levels of lead, the bill would require the water systems operator to notify the homeowner within two business days, while providing system-wide educational information within 30 days, compared to the current federal guideline of 60 days.

“As Americans, we are truly blessed to be able to draw water from our faucets and not think twice about its purity,” Rep. Ginter said. “However, we must remain diligent in our efforts to improve our water quality and protect the health of our citizens and families. I am privileged to have sponsored this legislation, which will greatly accelerate water quality testing, as well as require public water systems to notify and educate the public in a more timely manner.”

To help communities address possible lead issues, the bill originally helped coordinate state resources through low-interest loans for funding to communities and schools to prevent lead contamination. This would allow for communities to update some of their infrastructural needs, such as conducting corrosion control studies and optimizing treatment technologies. That grant program language for schools will be part of House Bill 547, an appropriations bill sponsored by Rep. Ryan Smith.

Drafted in coordination with the Ohio EPA, House Bill 512 works to address some of the many concerns with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act through proactive action on the state level.

The bill passed the House with bipartisan and unanimous support, and will now head to the Senate for further consideration.