

Anti-Rights of Nature Provision in Budget Bill Authored by Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Handed to State Representative

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 29, 2019

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Columbus, OH: An [email exchange](#) between the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the office of Ohio Representative James Hoops has been made public after a records request by a board member of the [Ohio Community Rights Network](#).

The emails reveal Zachary Frymier, Director of Energy and Environmental Policy for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce (who has since been promoted to State Government Affairs Manager for American Electric Power), expressing concerns about the Lake Erie Bill of Rights and requesting language revoking legal standing for nature and ecosystems be added to the Ohio budget.

*"We have some language that we'd request be considered for the budget. Though obviously it would have to be submitted **after** tomorrow's deadline we'd still like to have a conversation,"*

Legislative services commission staff questioned the necessity of the language. Frymier defended the language, to Hoops' legislative aide, arguing the *"language in this amendment stating that [nature and ecosystems] do not have standing is essential to what we're trying to accomplish. If we could get that added I would be very grateful,"* citing the passage of the Lake Erie Bill of Rights in Toledo as his reason.

"The Ohio Chamber of Commerce is rewriting Ohio law, handing it off to supposed 'representatives of the people,' in order to try to ban a people's movement. But Rights of Nature is a movement whose time has come. The genie is out of the bottle, and not the state, not the courts, and certainly

not the Ohio Chamber of Commerce can stop it. All that is uncertain, is which side of history those in power will be on,” said Toledo organizer Bryan Twitchell.

”These emails prove what the Ohio Community Rights Network has been trying to educate communities about for the past seven years,” stated Tish O’Dell, an Ohio community rights organizer. “Industry and government are colluding to make sure laws are written and passed in the best interest of corporations. Yet people continue to obediently follow these laws that have been written at the expense of people and nature. The people of Ohio are the only ones who can put a stop to this.”

The 2600+ page budget bill is overwhelmed with non-budgetary provisions in violation of the Ohio Constitution’s single-subject provision. The government violates the constitution, misses deadlines, and allows corporate lobbyists to write it’s laws. But rather than the new budget, it is the Lake Erie Bill of Rights that is under threat for being unconstitutional.

Ohio Communities Part of Growing Movement

Ohio residents are advancing Community Rights as part of the broader Community Rights Movement building across the United States, where other localities are advancing similar measures to establish and protect their rights to a healthy climate, clean air and water, and the right to local community self-government.

To learn more about the Ohio Community Rights Network, visit ohiocrn.org.

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