



**Testimony of Joe Logan, President, Ohio Farmers Union**  
**Ohio House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources**  
**H.B. 490 – Submitted as Written**  
**May 19, 2014**

Chairman Hall, Vice Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Cera and members of the Committee:

I am Joe Logan, a family farmer and former dairyman from Trumbull County and president of the Ohio Farmers Union. OFU represents over 4,000 farming families and consumers around Ohio who are committed to preserving and growing opportunities for family-sized, independent farmers and local and regional systems of food in Ohio.

OFU respectfully submits this written testimony in favor of passage of H.B. 490.

OFU is supportive of many of the proposals regarding water quality in the state, especially in light of the growing oil and gas drilling industry in Ohio. We are particularly pleased to see that intentional acts of water pollution could be treated as felonious criminal acts under state law. We believe that providing the ability for Ohio's county prosecutors to bring felony charges against those who knowingly pollute our streams and rivers and other watersheds will be a powerful deterrent to potential polluters.

OFU is also supportive of increased penalties under the bill for the improper disposal of brine created and used in fracking and other oil and gas drilling techniques. There is a growing concern among our membership – as evidenced by lengthy deliberations during our 2014 Annual Convention – over the increase in fracking operations throughout Ohio, but especially over the disposal of brine in injection wells. The fact that Ohio is not only a dumping ground for its own waste – but millions of gallons of waste from neighboring states - heightens OFU's concerns. While we commend H.B. 490's tightening and broadening of some regulation related to brine, we ask the committee to remain vigilant and open to further examination of this issue, including the incorporating of penalties for those acts of negligence that cause pollution.

OFU is essentially neutral on H.B. 490's transfer of authority over Agricultural Pollution Abatement from the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources Division of Soil and Water to the Ohio Dept. of Agriculture. We are concerned that some Soil and Water Conservation Districts have expressed their own concerns about the move.

To partially address those concerns and to foster better public policy with regard to Ohio's growing nutrient pollution in watersheds such as Lake Erie, OFU is supportive of two amendments being proposed by the Ohio Environmental Council:

1. To establish procedures for all owners or operators to report the amount of manure delivered to other persons and the location to which it is delivered;  
and
2. Allow sharing of data or information included within nutrient management plans for the purpose of developing regional or watershed pollution abatement strategies while ensuring there is no disclosure of proprietary or sensitive information.

Chairman Hall, Vice Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Cera, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony on H.B. 490.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joe Logan  
President, Ohio Farmers Union