

March 16, 2017

The Honorable Richard Carr, City of Maumee
The Honorable Paula Hicks-Hudson, City of Toledo
The Honorable Neil MacKinnon, City of Rossford
The Honorable Michael Olmstead, City of Perrysburg
The Honorable Edward Schimmel, City of Northwood
The Honorable Craig Stough, City of Sylvania
The Honorable Donald Atkinson, Village of Whitehouse
The Honorable Pete Gerken, Lucas County Commissioners
The Honorable Doris Herringshaw, Wood County Commissioners
The Honorable J. Henry Lievens, Monroe County Commissioners
The Honorable Jeff Rupp, Fulton County Commissioners

Dear Elected Officials:

As representatives of the Toledo region's business community, we urge you to not only identify but also implement a solution to the current debate over water.

Water is the most important long-term economic development issue we face. Other issues such as our workforce and geographic location will mean nothing if there is not an affordable and reliable supply of water. We are fortunate to have access to a fresh water source that many regions of the United States are envious of, yet it has become our dividing factor.

The problem that needs to be solved would seem to be the following:

- How do we deliver a quality water supply to our region most efficiently?
- What is the actual cost and pricing structure that provides the necessary financial return to support operations and the required investments to maintain quality, service and growth?
- How is the operation best managed in terms of technical competency and resources, along with leadership?

It is imperative that these questions be answered in collaboration among the affected parties. This collaboration must be done with a view to the future, not predicated on the actions of previous elected officials or contracts. The failure to come together will result in multiple wasted investments and stranded existing assets that require even more resources to operate. This is a community problem – not a political one.

Addressing the delivery of water should be done in an analytical and business framework that will provide answers that reasonable people can align around. It will be the failure of you, our elected leaders, if this is perceived to be an issue of selfish power or leverage and not a supply chain issue that just needs an answer that experts can provide. Our businesses and residents will pay the ultimate price and that is not acceptable.

We are cautiously optimistic by the recent decision by the TMACOG Regional Water Planning Committee to engage with a third-party to facilitate the formation of a 6119 Regional Water Authority. However for this to

be successful, this person must have experience developing a regional water system and be from outside the region to avoid any potential conflicts, real or perceived. The business community led by the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce is prepared to engage a consultant and pay for the facilitation needed to create a regional water authority.

We look forward to making regional water a reality for the Toledo region.

Sincerely,



Wendy R. Gramza, CCE
President



Marc Stockwell
Chairman

cc: Toledo City Council members
Council members, City of Toledo contract water communities
The Honorable Carol Contrada, TMACOG Water Quality Council
Tim Brown, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments
Jim Shaw, Lucas County Sanitary Engineer
Jerry Greiner, Northwestern Water & Sewer District
State Senator Randy Gardner
State Senator Edna Brown
State Senator Cliff Hite
State Representative Michael Ashford
State Representative Michael Sheehy
State Representative Teresa Fedor
State Representative Theresa Gavarone
State Representative Derek Merrin
State Representative Rob McColley