

Ohio Plan to Reduce Phosphorus Pollution Another Good Step

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(COLUMBUS – April 2, 2015) The Ohio legislature recently approved a proposal (Senate Bill 1) to protect western Lake Erie from toxic algae and safeguard the lake’s \$12.9 billion tourism economy. Ohio Senate Bill 1 will help reduce Lake Erie’s phosphorus pollution by limiting—with some exceptions—fertilizer and manure applications when the ground is frozen, snow-covered, saturated or when the weather forecast predicts heavy rain in the western Lake Erie basin. Governor Kasich will sign the bill today during a special ceremony. National, local and international conservation organizations committed to protecting Lake Erie from toxic algae—Alliance for the Great Lakes, Freshwater Future, Environmental Defence Canada, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Lake Erie Waterkeeper, Lake Erie Improvement Association, Michigan League of Conservation Voters, National Wildlife Federation, Ohio Environmental Council, and Sierra Club—issued the following statement in response:

“We thank Ohio legislators and Governor Kasich for a taking another good step to protect western Lake Erie from harmful algae blooms that feed off of fertilizer runoff from farms and livestock operations.

“While the bill makes strides to reduce western Lake Erie’s harmful algae, more needs to be done to protect waters that millions of people depend on for their drinking water, jobs, and way of life. All Lake Erie states and provinces need to do their part to cut by at least 40 percent the phosphorus pollution flowing into Lake Erie. We call on Governor Kasich, Governor Snyder and Ontario Premier Wynne to commit to reducing phosphorus in western Lake Erie by at least 40 percent. This commitment must include a clear timetable, with firm deadlines and milestones, and a monitoring plan to measure progress and make adjustments, if needed, to ensure deadlines are met.”

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Contacts:

Alliance for the Great Lakes, Jennifer Caddick, jcaddick@greatlakes.org

Environmental Defence Canada, Nancy Goucher, ngoucher@environmentaldefence.ca

Environmental Law & Policy Center, Madeline Fleisher, mfleisher@elpc.org

Freshwater Future, Cheryl Kallio, cheryl@freshwaterfuture.org

Lake Erie Improvement Association & Lake Erie Waterkeeper, Sandylakeerie@aol.com

Michigan League of Conservation Voters, Lisa Wozniak, lisa@michiganlcv.org

National Wildlife Federation, Frank Szollosi, szollosif@nwf.org

Ohio Environmental Council, Adam Rissien, arissien@theoec.org

Sierra Club, Jennifer Miller, jen.miller@sierraclub.org