



## **News from**

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(see letter to Butler [here](#))

### **LAKE ADVOCATES: OHIO EPA A “WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE FARM BUREAU”**

### **“Farm Bureau failed in federal court to protect the polluters of Chesapeake Bay, but the Bureau’s loyal agents in Ohio are trying again, this time in the legislature.”**

**TOLEDO** – [Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie](#) today sent a strongly-worded letter to Ohio EPA Director, Craig Butler, blasting him for being a “loyal agent” of the Ohio Farm Bureau and his agency a “wholly-owned subsidiary.”

What sparked the environmental group’s angry letter was a series of comments made over the last week by Butler and Deputy Director Karl Gebhardt, immediately distancing the agency from its long-delayed decision to list the open waters of western Lake Erie as “impaired,” made just days before a federal court judge ordered the USEPA to take action under the Clean Water Act (CWA). ACLE filed that suit with the Environmental Law & Policy Center.

ACLE coordinator, Mike Ferner, said, “After working diligently for over two years to get an impaired designation for Lake Erie and finally suing, we were outraged to see the head of Ohio EPA has no intention of following the provisions of the Clean Water Act, opting instead for legislation that will undoubtedly continue to shelter the lake’s polluters.”

The letter also rebuked OEPA Deputy Director Gebhardt for saying yesterday at a meeting of the Lake Erie Commission that a key CWA cleanup provision, establishing a “pollution diet” or Total Maximum Daily Load, “...is not necessary for the lake. It would take a considerable amount of time and would generate many lawsuits similar to what happened in the Chesapeake Bay.”

ACLE’s letter called Gebhardt’s statement, “the most conniving and cynical excuse” for why he and Butler are pushing for state legislation, since Gebhardt “knows full well it was [THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU THAT SUED THE USEPA TO STOP THE CHESAPEAKE BAY CLEANUP](#), joined by the Pennsylvania Farmer’s Bureau, the Fertilizer Institute, National Pork Producer’s Council, National Chicken Council and other Big Ag allies!”

“Mr. Gebhardt must take us for complete fools or perhaps illiterate, unable to read for ourselves what happened in Chesapeake Bay,” the letter charged.

The letter concluded by saying the group will continue to advocate for the lake “by educating, organizing and court actions if necessary. At some point we would like to see the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency as a partner in actually protecting the environment, but until then we will do whatever it takes to see that the job is done.”

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