

News From:
Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie



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LAKE ADVOCATES RAISE RED FLAG OVER SEN. RANDY GARDNER BILLS

A Toledo environmental group today raised a red flag about two bills backed by Ohio Senator Randy Gardner.

Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie, the group that sued the USEPA to end years of delay in declaring Lake Erie “impaired,” issued a statement warning the measures, reported in today’s Toledo Blade, “promise to throw millions of dollars down the same rat holes that for years have wasted taxpayer money and given us a lake that will go toxic again this summer.”

ACLE coordinator, Mike Ferner, said, “It’s time we looked behind Senator Gardner’s mask as a friend of Lake Erie for what he is: a long-time supporter of failed, voluntary measures that have let CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) operators use our lake as a free toilet for millions of confined animals.”

“Taxpayers across Ohio should be warned that his legislation will do two things: 1) bilk them out of hundreds of millions of dollars for measures proven to do nothing to stop the flood of feces, urine and excess nutrients into the lake (see attached) and 2) delay further the real efforts we know will bring Lake Erie back to health, measures now working to save [Chesapeake Bay](#).”

“And OEPA Director, Craig Butler, despite efforts to contrast his plans to Gardner’s as ‘the real deal,’ is no better. Butler admits that Gardner’s bills will simply throw money at the problem, unlike legislation Butler wants but can’t find a sponsor for, creating a ‘distressed watershed’ for western Lake Erie.

“This is the same shell game that allowed [the tragedy of Grand Lake St. Mary’s](#), Ohio’s largest inland lake that was destroyed by CAFO pollution, voluntary measures, and no accountability for those responsible.”

“What’s needed is clear and simple – follow the provisions of the Clean Water Act. The reason Butler, Gardner, the Farm Bureau and CAFO operators fear and avoid it is because it would bring an end to using our lake as a waste dump for industrial agriculture.”

The group said it will be vigilant in monitoring any state legislative attempts to circumvent the Clean Water Act requirements.

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