



Senator George Voinovich
524 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Clean Water Restoration Act S. 787

Dear Senator Voinovich:

The ongoing debate over the Clean Water Act and the Clean Water Restoration Act has prompted me to speak out in favor of restoring the protections that were afforded clean water for thirty years. Our family has been in the farming and food processing business for 86 years, and we are concerned that water quality for ours, and our contracted grower's farms will suffer in the wake of the guidance resulting from the recent Supreme Court decisions. Personally, I've served the Wood County Soil and Water Conservation District as a member of the board of supervisors for 9 years so the idea of conserving and protecting our waterways has always been near and dear to my heart.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) ensures clean water for all Americans to drink, swim, and farm, and in my case, hunt and fish. As a farmer and processor, clean water is vital to my livelihood, so protecting clean water is protecting my income and that of the thousands of other farmers who put food on Americans' tables. As a conservationist, I appreciate the fish and wildlife habitat provided by wetlands and intermittent streams.

Congress should restore the protections of the Clean Water Act to ensure that the water our children drink and that the water we use to grow crops on our farms is clean and free of pollutants. At the same time, restoring CWA protections to what they were before 2001 will streamline the regulatory process and ensure that farmers can continue to work their land. The recent administrative guidance on this issue has led to confusion and delay, stressed the EPA and Army Corps offices, and wasted taxpayers dollars as these agencies struggle to understand the new regulations.

Wetland loss has exacerbated the flooding that the mid-west experiences every year, and further wetland loss will only compound these problems in the future, leading to more damage to crops and communities, not to mention the loss of habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

Considering the same farming exemptions are in the CWRA, and I am just fine with those exemptions and see no problem passing this legislation.

The notion that restoring the CWA protections would be a federal land grab is preposterous. It would simply put the rights of Americans over the rights of polluters and act as an insurance policy that guarantees that farmers can continue to safely put food on Americans' table, and sportsmen/conservationists can continue to enjoy hunting and fishing. Thank you, and please support passage of the CWRA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Hirzel", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Eric Hirzel
Hirzel Canning Company and Farms
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