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**OAQDA Announces New Governor-Appointed Board Member,  
Approves Financing to Support Two Ohio Small Businesses**

COLUMBUS – At the monthly Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) board meeting on Tuesday (Sept. 8, 2020), the Authority welcomed its newest board member, Cara Dingus Brook, who was recently appointed by Governor Mike DeWine and is the president and CEO of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio.

"I am excited to welcome our newest Authority member who has made incredible public service contributions to Appalachian Ohio over the years," said Jim Simon, chairman, OAQDA. "Our team looks forward to working with her to continue to improve air quality in Appalachia and in every corner of the state."

During her time as CEO of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, Brook has helped the Foundation raise close to \$100 million in new philanthropy and bequests benefitting Appalachian Ohio. A hallmark of her leadership has been the strong partnerships she helped develop with local leaders across the 32 counties of Appalachian Ohio. The outcomes of these partnerships have included incubating 11 local community foundations and a regional economic development organization and starting an African American Community Fund. Prior to joining the Foundation, Brook served as the southeast Ohio district representative for U.S. Senator George V. Voinovich.

"OAQDA's mission to improve air quality in the State of Ohio is vital to the health and quality of life of all Ohioans, and I'm grateful and excited for the opportunity to help," said Brook.

During the board meeting, OAQDA also approved more than \$200,000 in bond financing and grants for two Ohio small businesses in Mahoning and Summit counties. The funding will allow the businesses to purchase and install new equipment utilizing improved air quality control technology that lowers or eliminates harmful pollution.

The projects approved at OAQDA's Sept. 8, 2020 meeting are as follows:

- **G&M Motors** (Summit County) located in Twinsburg, Ohio, is a used car dealership that is expanding its business to include an autobody repair shop. OAQDA has approved \$99,700 in financing and a grant for up to \$19,940 for the installation of a draft spray booth and mixing room for the new repair shop. The expansion will create five new full-time positions.
- **LaFrance Cleaners** (Mahoning County) is a third-generation dry-cleaning business in Youngstown, Ohio, with a central production facility, two stores and seven pick-up and delivery routes. The Authority has approved financing for up to \$100,000 and a grant for up to \$20,000 in funding to replace aging dry-cleaning equipment, which will eliminate the use of perchloroethylene (PERC), a known carcinogen, and will allow for the use of more environmentally friendly solvents.

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*The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) is a non-regulatory government agency created to help Ohio businesses comply and go beyond clean air regulations. Since its creation in 1970, OAQDA has worked to prevent air pollution throughout the state of Ohio by providing businesses with the resources they need to reduce harmful air emissions and be more energy efficient while creating jobs and boosting local economies. To date, OAQDA has awarded more than \$8 billion to finance air quality projects. For more information about OAQDA and its services, please visit [ohioairquality.org](http://ohioairquality.org).*