

June 16, 2025



Buckeye State Sheriffs
Association



County Commissioners
Association of Ohio



Ohio Association of
Chiefs of Police



Ohio Fraternal
Order of Police



Ohio Job and Family
Services Directors
Association



Ohio Mayors Alliance



Ohio Municipal League



Ohio Prosecuting
Attorneys Association



Public Children Services Association of Ohio



Buckeye Association of School Administrators

Dear Gov. DeWine, House Speaker Huffman, and Senate President McColley:

On behalf of the millions of Ohioans who rely on the vital public services that our communities, first responders, educators, and local governments provide, we join together today to express our grave concerns regarding the potential impacts of enacting House Bill 335. While we understand the urgency to address rising property taxes, we also know that potentially eliminating over \$3 billion of inside millage revenue would be extraordinarily damaging to Ohio's schools, local law enforcement, and other essential services provided by local communities.

In 2011, the state Local Government Fund (LGF) was reduced by half, costing local communities approximately \$300 to \$400 million in lost revenue each year. Under HB 335, Ohio's municipalities could lose over \$650 million, counties could lose over \$850 million, and Ohio's schools could lose \$1.9 billion each year, according to the Ohio Legislative Service Commission. The potential for lost revenue of this scale is staggering compared to the previous LGF cuts, and would have profound impacts on essential services in communities large and small across Ohio.

- For municipalities, the loss of \$650 million annually would seriously threaten staffing levels in police and fire departments across Ohio and make the challenge of keeping communities safe even more difficult. It would also immediately jeopardize municipal pension fund obligations and debt service payments for municipal bonds because inside millage in many cities has been utilized for these costs for decades.

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- The potential loss of funding for counties would have immediate and severe impacts on essential services. Sheriff's offices throughout Ohio, regional emergency management departments, and vital social services such as mental health and addiction treatment, child and adult protective services, would all face significant challenges in maintaining their operations and providing necessary support to the community.
- The magnitude of these funding reductions for Ohio's public schools are so significant that it could lead to a loss equivalent to 20,000 teachers or 20 percent of the state's teaching workforce. This would severely impact the quality of education in Ohio and the ability of schools to meet the needs of their students.

We do recognize that HB 335 provides an option for schools and communities to seek voter approval of inside millage to avoid funding cuts and service disruptions. However, this would likely result in hundreds if not thousands of additional levy requests in communities across Ohio. It would also exacerbate the confusion, frustration, and levy fatigue among Ohio voters. This is not practical, nor would it alleviate concerns Ohioans have regarding increasing property valuation and rising property tax costs.

We do recognize the need to be solution oriented and would welcome the opportunity for our organizations to work together with you on ways to provide both short-term relief and long-term property tax reform. However, this is not a collaboration that can be successful if it is constrained to the final 15 days of this months-long state budget process. We ask that the provisions in HB 335 repealing inside millage not be enacted or included in the state operating budget (HB 96) during conference committee. Instead, we hope to work together on solutions that address the concerns of Ohioans while not jeopardizing essential public services.

Respectfully,

Robert Cornwell, Executive Director
Buckeye State Sheriffs Association

Cheryl Subler, Executive Director
County Commissioners Association of Ohio

Police Chief Robert Butler, President
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Police Chief Jay McDonald, President
Ohio Fraternal Order of Police

Jon Honeck, Executive Director
Ohio Job & Family Services Directors' Association

Keary McCarthy, Executive Director
Ohio Mayors Alliance

Kent Scarrett, Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League

Louis Tobin, Executive Director
Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association

Angela Sausser, Executive Director
Public Children Services Association of Ohio

Dr. David Axner, Executive Director
Ohio School Administrators Association