



DELAWARE COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

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Sub. H.B. No 277

Proponent Testimony

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Coley, Ranking Member Skindell and members of the Finance Committee, I am Jeff Wilson, Chief of the BST&G Fire Department, and President of the Delaware County 9-1-1 Advisory Board. Also here today is Delaware County 9-1-1 Director Patrick Brandt. Together, we are here to express our support of Sub. H.B. 277 on behalf of Delaware County and the Delaware County 9-1-1 Advisory Board. As you know, Sub. H.B. 277 would allow a subdivision to levy a tax for 9-1-1 services in only those portions of the subdivision that are served that by that 9-1-1 system.

Under current law, a taxing authority must apply a tax uniformly throughout the taxing district, absent specific authority to exclude portions of the taxing district. For the Board of County Commissioners, the taxing district is the entire County. Current law also allows a board of county commissioners to levy a tax for operation of a 9-1-1 system, but does not authorize excluding portions of the taxing area. While Delaware County has a consolidated single Public Safety Answering Point countywide 9-1-1 system is defined to exclude municipalities that are primarily located in another county, legislation does not exist that provides for excluding those areas from taxation. This requires that the 9-1-1 levy include taxation of the entire district, including areas that do not utilize the service.



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In Delaware County, we have planned for the past year to file for a levy renewal or replacement due to the expiration of our current levy. We learned that, contrary to our current 9-1-1 plan, we could not exclude the cities of Westerville, Dublin or Columbus from the taxing area. All three cities in some manner tax and provide 9-1-1 services outside of the service provided by Delaware County. In spite of our early planning, we have decided to delay the filing until the last possible election in order to have the changes implemented by this legislation put into effect. We simply do not want to levy a tax for a service that we do not provide.

The legislation as proposed would specifically limit a county levied 9-1-1 tax to only those areas served by the county 9-1-1 system, and resolve an issue of unfair taxation. It is simply a matter of common sense and fairness.

Delaware County 9-1-1 current levy expires December 31 this year. As per the Ohio Secretary of State 2016 Election Calendar, we must file by 4pm on August 10th. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation, and we would be happy to answer any question you might have.