



**County
Commissioners
Association of Ohio**

Serving Ohio Counties Since 1880

Suzanne K. Dulaney, Esq., Executive Director

209 East State Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309

Phone: 614-221-5627 • Fax: 614-221-6986

Toll Free: 888-757-1904 • www.ccao.org

March 21, 2017

To: Members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Agriculture, Development and Natural Resources

From: Tony Bornhorst

RE: House Bill 49

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House Finance Subcommittee on Agriculture, Development and Natural Resources; Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill 64. My name is Tony Bornhorst, Shelby County Commissioner, farmer and a twenty seven year advisor for the Ft. Loramie Livestock 4-H Club which my father started when he was a senior at Ft. Loramie High School. Counties operate as local branches of state government, and our success for the citizens of Ohio relies upon a strong state and county partnership. I am here today to discuss CCAO's and my support for two key state/county partnerships as well as several agriculture and water quality priorities.

FUNDING FOR OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

OSU Extension is the first county/state partnership I would like to highlight. Since Extension is strictly educational and not regulatory in nature, it is well positioned to provide citizens with educational opportunities that government or private entities cannot fulfill. Counties are not mandated to fund Extension, yet all 88 counties have an Extension presence.

As a ten year 4-H Member, currently in my 27th year as an Advisor having the opportunity to advise all five of my children and now 3 of my grandchildren, I am able to see and experience the quality work that 4-H programs can provide for the youth of the state of Ohio. More than 250,000 young people across the state are participating in this outstanding educational and leadership program, and to quote our Juvenile Court Judge, "I do not see 4-H youth in my courtroom". These youth gain skills that prepare them to continue their education and enter the workforce, strengthening our state's economy and wellbeing.

OSU Extension has been center stage in both research and education efforts to address water quality concerns in the state. Edge of Field monitoring studies in Northwest Ohio are providing information on how nutrients are leaving our farm fields, and identifying practices to reduce and stop that nutrient loss. At the close of 2016 OSU Extension Educators have trained 12,600



County Risk
Sharing Authority

Fax: 614-220-0209
www.corsas.org



County Employee Benefits
Consortium of Ohio
CEBCO
Counties Uniting for Affordable Health Benefits

Fax: 614-229-4588
www.cebco.org



CCAO
County Commissioners
Association of Ohio
Service Corporation

Fax: 614-221-6986
www.ccao.org

farmers on the 4 R's Program. Those farmers operate over 2.3 million acres of cropland and their education will reduce input costs, minimize the impact on our environment and comply with ODA regulations.

These are just two examples of the many benefits of OSU Extension. CCAO and I support increasing the level of state support for OSU Extension provided that the additional funding does help relieve county general fund contributions. The as introduced version of HB 49 slightly reduces funding for Extension compared to the previous biennium.

FUNDING FOR SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

CCAO supports a county/state one-to-one funding match. I was a District Supervisor during the 1980's, the goal back then was to reach a one-to-one match and that is still true today and may be even more important now due to water quality issues. Funds generated locally including appropriations from the County General Fund, amount to about \$14.4 million per year, yet the proposed match is only \$10.28 million, a historically low level of match at \$.71 per local dollar invested. Again just as the in the case of OSU Extension, SWCD's are a non-mandated service but one that Shelby County and my fellow County Commissioners support because of the valuable work that the Districts do.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts provide expert assistance to both agriculture and urban stakeholders. SWCD's are locally led by a board of five publicly elected county residents. Soil and Water Conservation Districts work closely with Ohio's agriculture industry to reduce nutrient loss, by recommending, designing and supervising implementation of best management practices. Districts leverage federal funding from USDA and other entities to supplement local stakeholder dollars to meet requirements in written nutrient management plans. I wish to convey to the committee that Bornhorst Bros. just completed an update of our farm's Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. Districts assist with storm water management, flood prevention, ditch maintenance, stream flow improvements and help county officials resolve citizen drainage issues both in rural and urban areas.

FUNDING FOR OARDC, SEA GRANT & THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CCAO and I support state funding for OARDC, the Ohio Agriculture Research and Development Center, as well as Sea Grant and the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at OSU.

OARDC is the research arm of the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences of OSU and focuses on scientific disciplines critical to food security, environment, human health and pest management. The key to Ohio's competitiveness in the agricultural industry is continued support of innovation through this budget line. OARDC partners with producers, industry, government and citizens to explore new products and approaches; enhance profitability for agricultural businesses; and to minimize the impact on the health of the environment and humans.

Ohio Sea Grant is supported by the Ohio General Assembly, and that investment leverages federal funds. Sea Grant monitors and coordinates efforts to enhance the health of Lake Erie which supports a multi-billion dollar tourism industry.

Both OARDC and Sea Grant are funded at their FY 2016-17 levels in HB 54.

Agriculture is a \$107 billion dollar industry, and is the #1 industry for our State. My fellow commissioners and I support adequate funding for the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' (CFAES) academic programs as well as research and extension. CFAES provides a well prepared agriculture work force to maintain and grow Ohio's number one industry. ATI, the Agricultural Technical Institute, OSU's two year program is the leading provider of two year degrees in food and agriculture in the US. Well over 90% of ATI and CFAES graduates are working or continuing their education within six months of graduation, and 70% of those graduates remain in Ohio, an important reason that Ohio agriculture will remain the #1 industry. I am a proud graduate of The Ohio State University.

Thank you for your consideration of these important funding proposals, and would entertain any questions.