



## **OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION**

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### **House State & Local Government Committee**

**December 12, 2017**

**Proponent Testimony**

### **House Bill 415 Road Improvement Fund**

Good afternoon Madam Chair and members of the State & Local Government Committee. On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), thank you for the opportunity to express our support for House Bill 415, which would allocate one-half of any surplus revenue in the state's general fund to a new Local Government Improvement Fund at the end of a fiscal year.

Over the past 50 years, the number of people living outside municipal boundaries has increased 22 percent. This indicates more road usage within township boundaries on roads that are not built to sustain the traffic and which the township cannot afford to upgrade.

While traffic on township roads has increased, revenue for transportation improvements has remained stagnant, reduced or even eliminated. For townships, this includes the reductions in Local Government Fund (LGF) revenue, the elimination of the estate tax in 2013 and the accelerated phase out of Tangible Personal Property (TPP) tax and electric deregulation reimbursements. The last gas tax increase in Ohio, which was two cents, was back in 2005. Furthermore, the rise in the use of hybrid vehicles has led to lower gas tax revenues at the state and local level.

Ohio has one of the top ten largest highway systems in the U.S., the 2nd largest inventory of bridges and the 4th highest volume of traffic. Of the over 122,000 miles of road in Ohio, the 1,308 townships are responsible for the maintenance of 41,387 (34 percent) miles of road and over 80,000 lane miles.

Additional money is imperative for townships to sufficiently maintain and service safe roadways for their residents and the countless individuals that travel on them. The care and maintenance of the township road system in Ohio is the largest function of townships today. The outward migration to the unincorporated areas has caused an increase of traffic on township roads, especially by heavy commercial vehicles.

Safe and reliable roads are needed in Ohio to create and maintain economic development and a quality living environment for residents. The Ohio Township Association supports HB 415, as it would provide an additional revenue stream to local governments, including townships, for road maintenance and repair.

Finally, the OTA would like to thank Sponsors Greenspan and Ryan for introducing this legislation and we strongly encourage this committee to favorably report the measure to the full House for passage. Madam Chair, thank you for allowing me to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions you or the committee members may have.