



**AMERICANS FOR  
PROSPERITY®**  
OHIO

HOUSE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE  
Proponent Testimony on HB 720  
Tuesday, November 27, 2018

Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to provide testimony.

My name is Jeff Dillon, Legislative Liaison for Americans for Prosperity – Ohio. Americans for Prosperity is the nation’s largest free market grassroots advocacy group, with tens of thousands of activists here in the Buckeye State. On behalf of those activists, I urge you to support HB 720, which would require voter approval of county sales and use tax rate increases.

Americans for Prosperity has consistently advocated for transparent and responsive governments that are respectful stewards of taxpayer dollars. This bill would ensure that voters have a say in when, and by how much, county governments may increase sales and use taxes. Under current law, there are only a limited number of circumstances under which county commissioners must submit tax increases for voter approval—this bill would change that, and it represents another step toward the goal of advancing openness in government.

Taxpayers deserve to be made aware of, review, and approve proposed tax increases that their county governments seek to impose. In Ohio, all other local government entities—such as school boards, townships, and cities, require voter approval for tax increases. This bill would make sure that county commissioners adhere to the same requirements as other similar local government bodies.

Broad discretion to increase taxes without voter approval permits continuation of a system that is prone to overtaxing and overspending. By ensuring that any county commission’s decision to increase taxes is checked by the voters, HB 720 will add much needed protection from unnecessary or excessive tax increases at the county level, and it will allow citizens a fair chance to assess whether they are to see any genuine benefit from a tax increase or not.

The people who are ultimately responsible for paying the taxes should certainly have a say in whether or not those taxes are approved. At AFP – Ohio, we believe that government should be limited, and allow hardworking people to keep more of what they earn, having more resources available to realize their full potential. HB 720 would be an important check on county

government, and ensure that proposed tax policies are mutually beneficial to the public and to the government whose duty it is to advance the best interest of the people.

Thank you again, Chair Anielski, I'm happy to answer any questions the committee may have at this time.

Jeff Dillon  
Legislative Liaison  
Americans for Prosperity-Ohio

*Americans for Prosperity (AFP) exists to recruit, educate, and mobilize citizens in support of the policies and goals of a free society at the local, state, and federal level, helping every American live their dream – especially the least fortunate. AFP has more than 3.2 million activists across the nation, a local infrastructure that includes 36 state chapters, and has received financial support from more than 100,000 Americans in all 50 states. For more information, visit [www.AmericansForProsperity.org](http://www.AmericansForProsperity.org).*