



**County
Commissioners
Association of Ohio**

Serving Ohio Counties Since 1880

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TO: House Criminal Justice Committee
FROM: John R. Leutz, Esq., CCAO Legislative Counsel
SUBJECT: CCAO support for House Bill 85

Chairman Lang, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking member Leland and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, CCAO wishes to convey our support for HB 85, the Extreme Capitol Case Funding Bill.

We greatly appreciate Representative Wilkin's continued commitment to assist the Pike County Commissioners with managing the extreme financial burden that will fall upon their county in order to assure that justice will be accomplished in this matter. We also want to thank Representative Rogers for co-sponsoring this legislation. As noted in the sponsor's testimony last week "justice cannot be available only to those that can afford a proper defense or for counties that have the means to adequately prosecute crimes such as this."

We believe that the process proposed by this bill has been well thought out, is transparent, and will be successful in analyzing the potential costs to administer justice and providing appropriate assistance to a county to ensure that those who commit horrendous acts of violence are held accountable for their actions. We thank the Attorney General's office, State Public Defender, and Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association for their involvement in the drafting process and appreciate receiving their support for HB 85.

CCAO concurs in the parameters proposed for determining when a county would be eligible for state assistance which require that the capital case must include multiple victims or defendants and have an estimated cost of a trial that exceeds five percent of a county's budget for the year in which the case is prosecuted. We believe this qualifying criteria are reasonable, help to further justice, and protect a county from incurring significant financial distress brought on through no fault of its own.

CCAO strongly supports HB 85 and asks that the committee favorably recommend this legislation for passage by the full House.



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