



May 6, 2019

OHIO HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

PROPONENT TESTIMONY- SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 166

Julie Ehemann, Shelby County Commissioner

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Scherer, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the House Finance Committee, I am Julie Ehemann, a Shelby County Commissioner and President of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO). I have served in an elected position in local government for 25 years.

It is a new day in Ohio. We have reached a milestone. This budget presented by the House under Speaker Householder's leadership signals your commitment to the restoration of the partnership between our counties and the state and breathes new life into our relationship which has been strained, to say the least, over the last decade. Ohio's counties are truly grateful.

Full reimbursement for indigent defense costs is CCAO's main legislative priority for this budget. Substitute HB 166 should fully fund indigent defense reimbursement to the counties beginning in FY 2021, assuming conditions remain constant. This action builds upon the Governor's initial request to significantly increase funding for indigent defense reimbursement to support counties in their performance of the state's constitutional obligation to provide for indigent defense.

The sales tax reforms included in the substitute bill also are strong indicators of your desire to help counties obtain revenue stability.

Moreover, the significant investment in supporting children's services will strengthen our counties' ability to make a difference in the lives of our most precious resource - our children.

The recently adopted transportation budget also was an important step in providing resources to allow counties to invest in our roads and bridges - critical infrastructure necessary to support Ohio's economic health and prosperity.

Your actions in this budget proposal lay a strong foundation for a meaningful state/county partnership that will serve Ohio well and improve the quality of life for the residents of our great state. Our slogan at CCAO is - Stronger counties, stronger partnership, stronger Ohio. Thank you, Speaker Householder, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee for giving real meaning to these words.



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Sharing Authority

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Consortium of Ohio

Counties Uniting for Affordable Health Benefits

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