



County Auditors' Association of Ohio

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HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

HOUSE BILL 273

HONORABLE MATT NOLAN WARREN COUNTY AUDITOR

Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Rogers,
and members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 273 on Behalf of the County Auditors' Association of Ohio (CAAO). I am Matt Nolan, Warren County Auditor. This bill is not only going to modernize the officers of the County Auditor and Treasurer, but also potentially generate enough savings to allocate money to other areas and needs of county governments.

As you all are aware taxpayers are provided individual notices, several times, that they owe taxes to their County Treasurer. They receive tax bills, individualized letters and finally, under current law, their name is placed in the newspaper twice. Our relatively small proposal is to amend the final piece of this and only place their name in the newspaper one time.

I am sure this sounds incredibly minor when compared to the important work this body has in front of it, but the impact of it is surprisingly large on many of our Counties. Hamilton County could save \$32,850 dollars annually from this simple piece of legislation. Cuyahoga County, accounted for 28% of all statewide delinquent property taxes in 2016. In Cuyahoga County alone, the savings could be upwards of \$60,000 dollars a year if House Bill 273 is enacted. In these strong economic times we anticipate hundreds of thousands of dollars of savings to Counties bottom line. During recessions, when delinquencies increase, this number will likely cross over a million dollars a year.

In addition to the savings in this bill, online publications might be more effective than paid advertisements in a local newspaper. In Warren County, and many Counties outside the urban cores, there is not one general newspaper in circulation that serves the entire population. This makes an online publication a more accessible option for many areas of Ohio.

To clarify, this legislation does not require a county to publish their delinquent tax lists online, but only offers this as a choice for the second publication if it makes sense for their county.

The current law serves to send tax dollars to local newspapers for the sole purpose of guiltning property owners into paying their taxes. Having spent my entire career working with the Auditor and Treasurer's offices I have found the practice to not only be insulting but ineffective.

I personally have no interest in continuing this practice. People do not need to be guilted into paying their taxes, they do not need to be embarrassed; they know that they owe their taxes, they know the consequences of not paying their taxes and for many different reasons they are unable to pay them. Let's stop this antiquated practice and in doing so, save the taxpayers of this State hundreds of thousands of dollars that can go to real needs.

Thank you for the chance to speak in support of House Bill 273 today. I would be more than happy to respond to any questions you may have at this time.