

## Investing in Ohio's Local Communities

Communities in Ohio all have diverse needs, but local budgets throughout the state are stressed. Governor DeWine is committed to listening to the concerns of community leaders and collaborating with local government to find solutions. Governor DeWine's executive budget includes substantial investment in local partners to help them provide valuable services to citizens.

The budget identifies specific areas where state funding can support local governments and help local communities by:

**Increasing the state's child protective allocation by \$30 million per year for a total of \$90 million annually.** Governor DeWine knows that investing in Ohio's children is an investment in Ohio's future, and this funding will give county children services agencies more resources to help kids whose parents are suffering from mental health or substance use disorders. More than half of Ohio's kids in foster care are there because at least one parent has substance use disorder.

In 2018 alone, more than 15,500 children were served in out-of-home care at any point during the year, a 25 percent increase from 2013. Because counties bear a disproportionate share of the cost for caring for these kids, this additional funding will give local children services agencies resources and flexibility to provide for these children.

**Increasing state support for indigent defense by \$60 million per year** to assist local partners in providing counsel for defendants who cannot afford an attorney. This unprecedented support for indigent defense demonstrates Governor DeWine's belief that the state must help local partners provide individuals with their Constitutional right to counsel.

Under the current system, the state reimbursement to counties for indigent defense is capped at 50 percent. The executive budget proposes eliminating the current 50

percent statutory cap on the state's reimbursement share and increases state support for indigent defense by \$60 million per year.

This support for counties addresses a pressing need in the criminal justice system and helps alleviate local budget pressures by making county general funds available for other purposes.

**Providing local libraries with an additional \$8.5 million over the biennium** by maintaining the current rate for the Public Library fund at 1.68 percent for the upcoming biennium, which is currently scheduled to drop to 1.66 percent in fiscal year 2020. Ohio is library-rich with 251 public library systems which work collaboratively to provide critical services to their patrons. Governor DeWine believes that libraries are the cornerstone of Ohio's communities because they play an important role in workforce development and early literacy initiatives.

**Investing in effective drug task force models** through increased funding for the continued operation of existing local drug task forces. Governor DeWine wants to empower local drug task forces with more resources to investigate drug traffickers and take deadly drugs off the streets. Spending for existing drug task forces will increase from \$8 million per year to \$13.9 million in 2020 and 2021 to help local authorities intensify their efforts to combat Ohio's drug epidemic.

Governor DeWine's priority to hold drug traffickers accountable also includes the creation of three new Cartel Trafficking Route Interdiction task forces. The new task forces, made up of local, state, and federal authorities, will disrupt the flow of money and drugs from cartels by arresting traffickers and intercepting methamphetamine, fentanyl and other illegal narcotics coming into and out of Ohio.

**Increasing funding to help solve sexual assault cases.** Throughout his career, Governor DeWine has dedicated himself to serving victims of crime. While serving as Ohio's attorney general, Governor DeWine directed the DNA analysis of nearly 14,000 previously untested rape kits. The executive budget includes \$1 million to support law enforcement agencies with costs associated with investigations and prosecutions resulting from this important testing.

**Providing \$6.8 million in fiscal year 2020 and \$9.3 million in fiscal year 2021 for the creation of probation departments in courts that do not currently have one**, in lieu of utilizing state parole officers. Governor DeWine recognizes that local control and operation of probation departments can help local authorities better address the specific needs of the local criminal justice system.

**Authorizing local governments to extend Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) terms** up to an additional 30 years for larger, high impact developments. TIFs redirect additional real estate taxes created by new development to construct infrastructure needed by that development. Governor DeWine's proposal gives local legislative bodies the option to extend a TIF that meets all extension qualifications.

**Investing in businesses in Ohio by establishing Opportunity Zones** for economically-distressed communities. Ohio has the opportunity to bring billions of dollars in private investment to help revitalize communities that need it the most. By conforming Ohio tax law to include the Opportunity Zones established in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, Ohio can provide a brighter future for thousands of Ohioans with better jobs.

**Increasing funding to the Local Government Fund** to fund local crisis services related to substance use disorder with money from the General Revenue Fund instead of diverting funds from the Local Government Fund. This decision, coupled with natural revenue growth, will provide an additional \$33.8 million in fiscal year 2020 and \$6.4 million in revenue for the Local Government Fund.

**Addressing Academic Distress Commissions.** Governor DeWine believes it is unacceptable to let a failing school district continue failing its students, but the current model of state takeover is clearly not working as intended. The budget will include language that provides alternatives for school districts that are showing improvement. These alternatives will promote interventions that improve academic performance, restore some local control over schools, and leave in place the option for state intervention when a school district has truly failed its students.

