

Mike Musto, Columbia Township Trustee  
16449 South Boone Rd  
Columbia Station, Ohio 44028  
Lorain County

February 16, 2016

Dear Representatives,

Madam Chair and distinguished members of the House Local Government Committee, I stand before you this morning as a proponent to H.B. 333. Raising the limits of Section 5575.01(A) to \$90,000 is needed for Columbia Township to continue maintaining our 40.7 miles of township roads. The increase in road materials has made it close to impossible to continue this work under the current limits.

Over the years we have purchased our own equipment. We also collaborate with neighboring municipalities. Our labor and equipment costs will not go up if the force account limits are raised. By sharing resources with our neighbors we are able to save 50% of the cost of road repair compared to competitively bidding the projects. If this proposed increase in HB 333 does not pass we will not be able to continue collaborating and our costs will go up.

If our costs go up we will have to ask our residents for addition levy money. We have all suffered revenue cuts lately. Our residents have not been in a financial position to vote for additional property taxes. We need an increase in the force account to be able to maintain our roads to the current standards.

Increasing the limits of 5575.01(B) from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per mile, will make a significant change to allow us to construct or re-construct only just small sections of roadway. The new limits of 5575.01(B) would not allow us to construct or reconstruct a mile of road, as the cost of doing so would exceed the proposed new limits.

We are just asking for some limited help, not trying to eliminate all bidding of township projects. We recently had two and a quarter miles of asphalt road reconstructed for \$560,000. The Township is not able to do this type of work, therefore it must be bid out. The cost of the equipment to do this on our own is prohibitive.

Both the Northeast Ohio Township Association and the Lorain County Township Association passed a resolution supporting raising the force account limit. To be able to afford our obligations to our residents we would ask that you support this legislation.

Thank you Madam Chair and members for your time and attention to this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

*Mike Musto*

Mike Musto  
Columbia Township Trustee