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# OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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August 31, 2020

The Honorable Frank Hoagland, Chair  
Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: SB 333 Land Acquisition

Dear Chairman Hoagland:

On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), I am writing to express our support of Senate Bill 333, which requires the Department of Natural Resources to reimburse lost tax revenue to school districts and other subdivisions, like townships, as a result of significant land acquisitions after 2018.

Senate Bill 333 will help relieve the financial burden faced by entities that have seen over 5,000 acres removed from the tax list due to an ODNR land acquisition. As pointed out by the sponsor, this legislation is largely in response to the AEP land transfer, affecting Guernsey, Morgan, Muskingum, and Noble counties, that has decimated some township budgets in the area. The AEP land transfer is certainly unique in its scale, but this issue is not unique to townships. For example, conservancy districts, parks, and other tax-exempt entities frequently purchase or acquire large pieces of property across the state, reducing resources for townships.

The OTA supports the availability of public land for parks and natural resources in our state. However, expansions such as these can have alternative costs to the communities surrounding them. While townships only levy six percent of the property taxes statewide, the main source of township funding is the property tax. Furthermore, townships are still required to provide service in and around tax-exempt property, including fire, EMS, and road maintenance, thus further reducing their budgets.

Senate Bill 333 is an attempt to address local impacts for significant property transfers to the state. The OTA supports SB 333 and any proposal that would help stabilize township budgets, in part or in whole, in these scenarios.

Again, the OTA respectfully requests your support of Senate Bill 333. We appreciate your consideration of our position. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-863-0045 or [myers@ohiotownships.org](mailto:myers@ohiotownships.org).

Sincerely,

Marisa Myers  
Director of Governmental Affairs