



Safe Children, Stable Families, Supportive Communities

December 16, 2020
Opponent Testimony Sub HB76
General Government and Agency Review Committee
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Chair Schuring, Vice-Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien, and Members of the Committee, this written testimony is on behalf of the Trustees and members of the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO). PCSAO is a membership-driven association of Ohio's county public children services agencies (PCSAs) that advocates for and promotes children services program excellence and sound public policy for safe children, stable families, and supportive communities.

We are writing to share our continuing opposition to Substitute House Bill 76, the Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act for Property Tax Levies. Ohio's children services system is heavily reliant on local funding; in SFY2018, nearly half of the system was funded by local dollars.ⁱ Currently, 53 PCSAs maintain local levies. It is within this context that we oppose this bill.

The intent of HB76 is to update antiquated ballot language, increase transparency, and provide uniformity. Neither the bill as introduced nor the recent amendments to the bill achieve this intent. Instead, the bill likely will create confusion and make levy ballot language less transparent. Further, because the bill applies a "one-size-fits-all" approach to properties, regardless of classification, it could lead to legal challenges due to its misleading nature. We welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsor to address these concerns and achieve the goal of this legislation.

Voters should make informed decisions when considering levy requests. This bill would make that more difficult and open the door to possible legal challenges. For these reasons, PCSAO opposes Substitute House Bill 76 and respectfully requests that this Committee not advance this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

ⁱ PCSAO 14th Edition Factbook, 2019. Data provided by ODJFS, special data runs, received 11/19/2018 and 1/4/2019. Additional calculations by PCSAO.