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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

Ohio House Ways & Means Committee
House Bill 458 – Proponent Testimony

Cory Noonan - Allen County Commissioner

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Chairman Merrin, Vice Chair Riedel, Ranking Member Sobecki and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon in support of House Bill 458.

My name is Cory Noonan and I am in my ninth year of service as an Allen County Commissioner. I am here today to speak on behalf of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO). As part of CCAO, I serve on the association's board of directors as well as a member of the CCAO Joint Committee on Administration of Elections, which reviews elections-related legislation in partnership with the County Association of Election Officials.

Counties have a significant budgetary obligation to county boards of elections. CCAO has a longstanding policy of supporting efforts to contain, and where appropriate, reduce the overall cost of election administration.

The CCAO policy platform calls for curtailing August special elections. August special elections consume staff time and resources from county boards of elections. County boards of elections must train and recruit poll workers, print ballot materials, conduct early voting, prepare voting locations and fulfill all other requirements, all for August special elections which traditionally feature low voter engagement. These resources could be better utilized elsewhere.

HB 458 proposes to limit elections primarily to general and primary elections, with certain reasonable exceptions. Eliminating August special elections would result in savings for local governments, as the cost of placing a single issue before voters in a special election is typically charged back to the taxing district that proposed the tax levy. These chargebacks, however, do not encompass the wear and tear on voting machines, which counties are responsible to provide and maintain.

CCAO believes primary and general elections provide adequate opportunities for local governments to plan and conduct tax-levy campaigns. Voters are often unaccustomed to going to the polls in August, which leads to lower voter turnout. Having these issues



considered during a primary or general election will likely engage a greater portion of the electorate.

CCAO previously supported the elimination of the February special election, as effectuated in House Bill 64 of the 131st General Assembly. CCAO asks that the General Assembly continue this progress of simplifying Ohio's election administration process by passing HB 458.

I thank you for your time and consideration and would be happy to answer any questions you may have for me.