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Cheryl Subler, Executive Director

Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee
House Bill 487 – Written Proponent Testimony

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Chairman Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony in support of House Bill 487.

Counties have a significant budgetary obligation to fund county boards of elections. The many aspects of conducting elections, from the printing of ballots to paying poll workers, all impact county finances. While counties have limited chargeback authority to allocate a portion of these costs amongst other political subdivisions, election administration remains a considerable expense to county government.

Furthermore, federal and state election requirements enacted over the years, sometimes without corresponding funding, leave counties further exposed to rising election costs. Thus, CCAO has a longstanding policy of supporting efforts to contain, and where appropriate, reduce the overall cost of election administration.

House Bill 487 makes several welcome changes that have the potential to reduce expenses while still maintaining safe and secure elections.

HB 487 would update Ohio statute as it applies to contractor bond requirements for the printing of ballots. Outdated bond requirements in statute require bid bonds of 200 percent of the cost of the proposal, which unnecessarily increases ballot printing costs. HB 487 would adjust bond requirements to better align with modern public procurement processes, and in doing so, save taxpayer funds.

Additionally, HB 487 would allow for ballots to be printed out of state. By expanding the number of firms eligible to compete for these contracts, market forces will allow for greater competition for these contracts which will ultimately provide greater value for taxpayers.



While there remains considerable work to do on the broader issue of election funding, HB 487 is a good step in modernizing Ohio's elections statute so that limited taxpayer resources make the greatest impact.

I thank you for your consideration of CCAO's comments on this important issue. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact CCAO at any time.