

TO: Chairman Kunze, VC Reineke, Ranking Minority Member Antonio  
Transportation Committee Members

FROM: Frederick T. Wachtel, P.E., P.S., Coshocton County Engineer

DATE: March 21, 2021

RE: **Sub HB 74, Transportation Budget**  
**FORCE ACCOUNT limits increase – SUPPORT**

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County: Coshocton

Budget: \$4,131,000 -average from 2007-2020

I support the language increasing county and other local government force account limits included in Sub. House Bill 74, the Transportation Budget.

Coshocton County is a rural county of 36,000 citizens in East Central Ohio. I am the County Engineer and have served in that capacity since January, 1993. I also have the honor of serving as the 2021 President of the County Engineers' Association of Ohio. As Coshocton County Engineer I am responsible for 269 bridges and 350 miles of road. Our work force, represented by A.F.S.C.M.E., consists of 14 highway maintenance workers and two mechanics.

During my tenure we have rehabilitated or replaced over 170 bridges. Ten percent of these were built totally by contractors because they were either major structures with spans up to 400 feet or were funded with Federal Dollars. The other projects completed by Force Account ranged in size from 10 feet to 40 feet span. Many of these force account projects included tasks subcontracted out because we do not have the equipment necessary to lift and place concrete beams or 4-sided concrete box bridges.

Building smaller structures by Force Account allows to us be flexible with our construction schedule and to respond quickly in the event of rapid deterioration of a structure. It also allows us to fully utilize our work force year round since we have to have adequate staff to handle weather events.