



**OHIO HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
November 20, 2024**

**Proponent Testimony
House Joint Resolution 8**

Chair Edwards, Vice Chair LaRe, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Ohio House Finance Committee:

My name is Rod Davisson. I am the City Manager of Obetz, a growing and prosperous community in central Ohio with a population of approximately 7,500 residents. I am also a board member of the Ohio Municipal League, which serves more than 730 cities and villages across our state.

On behalf of the league and the City of Obetz, I appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony regarding our support for House Joint Resolution 8, which would place before Ohio voters the reauthorization to borrow money for the Ohio Public Works Commission's State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) —a program that has been extremely valuable to cities, villages, and other local governments throughout the state.

The work of Ohio's municipal officials to provide for their businesses and residents is vital to the economic success of the state, and maintaining infrastructure is a significant part of achieving this success.

I want to emphasize just how critical this bill is to the long-term maintenance and sustainability of infrastructure in communities like Obetz. Our city has more than 100 lane miles of roads. To repave just one lane mile costs approximately \$1 million, meaning that repaving all of Obetz's roads one time would require about \$100 million.

However, the challenges go far beyond roads. Obetz also has hundreds of miles of underground water and sewer pipes, as well as sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and storm sewers. All of these require regular maintenance and periodic replacement. These are costly but necessary investments to ensure the safety, functionality, and growth of our community.

Even though Obetz is, for its size, a very wealthy community—with a net value exceeding \$100 million and an annual budget surpassing \$50 million—it is still financially unrealistic to maintain this vast and aging infrastructure without outside support. Our annual capital budget is just \$2 million. That must cover everything from road maintenance to essential capital purchases like police cruisers, snow plows, and

other equipment. If every dollar of that budget were spent solely on repaving roads, it would take more than 50 years to repave every road once—and that's without addressing sidewalks, storm sewers, or the underground utilities that are just as essential to our city's health and growth.

The reality is that infrastructure funding from the state is not just a boost—it's a lifeline. The needs in Obetz are mirrored in OML-member communities across Ohio. Without this funding, municipalities are forced into cycles of deferred maintenance, reactive repairs, and long-term cost increases. Roads, waterlines, and sewers are foundational to economic development, resident safety, and quality of life, and they cannot be neglected without severe consequences.

This resolution represents an opportunity to invest in Ohio's future, ensuring that all of our communities—regardless of size or current wealth—can meet their infrastructure needs. For Obetz, this funding would provide the resources necessary to keep our roads and utilities safe, functional, and capable of supporting future growth.

We appreciate Representative Oelslager and Representative Troy for introducing this resolution and responding to the needs of local governments.

On behalf of Obetz and countless other municipalities across Ohio, I strongly urge you to pass this legislation. It is a critical step toward ensuring that Ohio's infrastructure remains a foundation for growth, prosperity, and opportunity.

Thank you for your time and for your attention to this critical issue. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.