



# Batavia Township

1535 Clough Pike  
Batavia Township, Ohio 45103  
Phone: 513-732-3888

## House Bill 101 Village Dissolution House State and Local Government Committee Proponent Testimony May 16, 2023

Chairwoman John, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, my name is Jennifer Haley, and I am Fiscal Officer for Batavia Township in Clermont County. Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB 101, which alters village dissolution laws.

Batavia Township knows village dissolution all too well. We are one of the two townships that inherited residents, land, roads, and public safety from the Village of Amelia dissolution. The Village of Amelia had 4,801 residents and 13 road miles to be divided up between two townships. Sadly, the dissolution is still not complete after four years. Batavia township is still paying for the utilities on the old administration building and the police building, and there are still many properties left to be sold off from the village.

Had the legislation before you been law when Amelia dissolved, the dissolution process would have been streamlined in many ways. HB 101 improves the process of transferring assets and does so in a timely fashion. With the Transition Supervisory Board this legislation creates, dissolutions will be orderly and will follow a step-by-step process until complete with a final audit. Currently, Batavia Township and Pierce Township jointly own real estate and must agree on the sale and disposition of properties. Batavia inherited 44 pieces when the dissolution happened. The sale or repurposing of the properties would have been taken care of had the board been installed.

While Batavia Township supports the Transition Supervisory Board, **we request a township official should be included as a member on the board.** With many moving parts in the process the township receiving the village should be kept informed and involved in all steps of the process of dissolution.

One item in this legislation that we oppose is the requirement of leftover funds to be expended on the former village for indirect benefit. This provision could result in potential legal action should someone not agree with the indirect use of the funds, and I question how it would be tested during an audit. Batavia Township **respectfully requests that the leftover funds be allocated to the township's general fund** to be best used for township residents. After all, the residents from the dissolved village are now township residents.

Batavia Township also supports the inclusion of public records review by the Transition Board. One example of where this review is crucial would be the turning over of a cemetery during dissolution. Townships are mandated to care for and maintain cemeteries and records. With a 90-day timeline to complete the review, and the board being responsible for the transfer, this will help townships comply with Ohio law.

Lastly, **we request for township zoning resolutions to be specifically mentioned** in the language. For townships that have zoning in place, this would handle on-going development and allow business to keep moving and not be affected by the dissolution.

Batavia Township thanks the bill's sponsors, Representatives Bird and Schmidt, for continuing their work on this topic in this General Assembly and urges your support of HB 101 and the changes we have recommended.

Madam Chair, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you and the House State & Local Government Committee this afternoon. I would be happy to answer any questions you or the committee members may have.