



Ohio House Ways and Means Committee  
House Bill 1 – Opposition Testimony

The Board of Trustees of the  
Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library  
March 20, 2023

Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Merrin, Ranking Member Troy and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written opposition testimony regarding House Bill 1.

The Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library is a vibrant and important resource for members of our community. In 2022 the library had 517,692 visitors, circulated 1,505,633 items, and currently has 44,960 library cardholders. We also held 2,102 library programs, hosted 2,202 community group meetings and processed 522 passport applications. The 2022 Summer Reading programs had the highest participation in years with 1,318 children, 152 teenagers and 1,950 adults registered in the program. Starting in April a representative from Ohio Means Jobs will be at the library one day week to provide services to our community members.

During COVID the library continued to pay all staff and provided curbside pick-up for materials, purchased additional hotspots to lend for those without Internet service and was one of the few locations in the county that allowed the use of our meeting rooms for poll worker training.

All of these activities can only be done with financial support of our local taxpayers who have approved 10 mills of property taxes and the state Public Library Fund. Members of the library board are greatly concerned about the financial impact HB1 will have on the library and unanimously approved the resolution below at the March 20th public meeting of the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library Board of Trustees.

**RESOLUTION 25-2023  
APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION  
OPPOSING STATE BUDGET CUTS TO LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

WHEREAS; Ohio House Bill 1, as introduced, cuts and flattens Ohio’s income tax rates that currently range from 2.765% on people making between \$26,051.00 and \$46,100.00 and 3.99% for Ohioans making more than \$115,300.00, to a flat state income tax rate of 2.75% on incomes above \$26,050.00; and

WHEREAS, HB 1 proposes the state make up for lost income-tax revenue by slashing funding

given to local governments for schools, libraries, park districts, community colleges, mental health, developmental disabilities boards etc.; and

WHEREAS; the estimated \$1.734 billion loss to the state general revenue fund from the income tax could decrease the allocation to the Public Library Fund by \$25 to \$34 million a year, which could result in the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library receiving \$165,000 to \$231,000 less each year in state library funding; and

WHEREAS; a proposal to have the state cease and/or scale back payments to local governments for real estate property tax credits could further decrease revenue to the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library by an estimated \$793,500; and

WHEREAS; these two proposed changes could decrease revenue from the State of Ohio to the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Public Library by an estimated \$1 million a year which is close to 8% of the total library revenue; and

WHEREAS; HB 1 also proposes to decrease the property tax assessment rate from 35% of market value to 31% which could trigger HB 920 calculations to increase effective tax millage and property taxes to local taxpayers at a time when many families are coping with increasing inflation and residual impacts of Covid; and

WHEREAS; the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Library Board of Trustees believes HB 1 is short-sighted and would weaken state finances going forward, undermine state economic growth, which is a function of healthy communities, educated workers, and effective infrastructure made possible by state revenue;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cleveland Hts.-University Hts. Library Board of Trustees requests members of the Ohio State Legislature to carefully consider the sections of HB 1 which will negatively impact members of our communities as decreases in state funding could cause cuts in local library services due to decreasing revenue from the State of Ohio and impose an additional tax burden on local property taxpayers.

We would respectfully request that public libraries be held harmless from any sections of HB1 that are approved and would decrease library funding as community members are seeking more services from local libraries, not less. If there is any further information the library can provide the committee as HB1 progresses please contact us.