

*Narrated to the Ways & Means Committee:*

June 20, 2023

Good afternoon Chairman Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy, all other committee members.

It is a pleasure to come before you all today, and I would like to thank Representative Creech for inviting Preble County to speak in support of House Bill 187.

I am Sean Maggard, Chief Deputy Auditor, appearing on behalf of the Honorable Preble County Auditor, Lavon Wright.

I have worked in local government for nearly 33 years, 30 of those years in Real Estate. I was also a school board member for 8 years, and I've been involved in creating Conveyance standards, Survey standards, Access Management Standards & Procedures, and Zoning Rules & Regulations for Preble County.

On Friday June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 during the County Auditor's summer conference, the County Auditor's Association of Ohio voted to oppose HB 187- or the amendment inserted into HB33 (which I believe are similar in respect to the valuation process followed by the Ohio Department of Taxation).

Unfortunately, myself and Auditor Wright had prior engagements, and were not able to be at the final day of the conference. Therefor we did not have a chance to comment upon HB 187 to the Association. We fully respect the County Auditors Association, and appreciate their stance on the Bill. However, we are here today in support of HB 187. We understand the stance taken by the Association as we think the Association believes that the State has a taxation problem, not a valuation problem, and that this bill does little to address the real issue, and is more of a temporary band-aid. We also support the Association in their opinion that there is a taxation problem, but we believe that this bill is true to what County Auditors are required to do. We have to implement what is best for our county. What works for larger counties, does not work for rural Preble County. In Preble County, we need all 3 three years sales data because there aren't enough sales in one year to establish property values. There are several taxing districts that might only have one sale in one year. We cannot use that one sale to set values for a whole district.

We believe that the most accurate way to find the average of anything is to use all of the data provided. We cannot think of any other circumstance that when finding an average, that you would only use the final third of the data.

There will be times that this will lower property values, and there will be times that this will raise property values, but it will be accurate, and it will stay true to the O.R.C as written.

I invite you to read Ohio Revised Code 5715.12 that supports this.

It is our belief that we are still following industry guidelines for County Mass Appraisal, and the intent of the ORC as written. It is our opinion that the intent of the sampling should be taken over the whole 3 years, and not the final year, and this bill helps clear that up. We pay a great deal of money for expert appraisals. These recommendations are ignored by the Ohio Department of Taxation because of the amount of emphasis they place on the final year of data collected. It has caused values to be higher, than what our professional appraisal company has recommended to us for several cycles now.

It is our opinion that this bill will help accomplish a better and fairer valuation system no matter which way values are trending, and stay true to the law as written. Thank you for your time and listening to our opinion in this matter. *I am available to answer any questions that you may have.*