Senate Finance Committee
SB 292 – Proponent Testimony
Written Only

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Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Senate Bill 292.

CCAO is thankful for the funding allocated towards jail construction and renovation in the current version of SB 292. Recently, CCAO and the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association (BSSA) updated a survey originally conducted in 2019 to determine the overall need for jail construction projects at the county level. The results of the survey showed there is currently an overall need of $2.2 billion dollars, which is an increase from 2019. Furthermore, inflationary factors have exacerbated the construction costs, with the average project cost increasing 41.5% from the initial bid to the expected completed cost of the project.

The current inflationary environment has caused construction quotes to almost double from $600 per square foot up to $1100 per square foot in some instances for the building of a new jail. The increase in construction costs is starting to price counties out of the ability to construct jails using only local funding. It has become increasingly more difficult to use only local funds not only due to inflation increases, but to also modernize or update the existing jail, and to meet the complex mental health and substance abuse needs for citizens within the jail.

We are very thankful for the continued financial support as state funding is viewed as critical and necessary to help address the construction funding needs within Ohio. CCAO is also looking forward to continuing our partnership to help advance the needs for its citizens.