



American Council of Engineering Companies
of Ohio

**Senate Finance Committee
SJR 4 –Proponent Testimony
Written Only
November 12, 2024**

Chairman Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, Ranking Member Sykes and members of the Finance committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit proponent testimony on Senate Joint Resolution 4, which seeks to place a critical issue on the May 2025 statewide ballot. This resolution would renew and expand Ohio’s highly successful State Capital Improvement Program, which is administered by the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC).

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Ohio (ACEC Ohio) is a professional association representing approximately 150 engineering firms across the state. Our members serve as trusted advisors to countless cities, counties, townships, and special improvement districts, assisting them with planning and designing essential infrastructure projects. Since the program’s inception in the late 1980s, ACEC Ohio members have been privileged to collaborate on planning and executing several billion dollars worth of water, sewer, road, and bridge projects—local improvements that would have been challenging, if not impossible, without this vital funding source.

While renewal of the State Capital Improvement Program won’t address all of the capital needs of Ohio’s local governments, it will enable many of them to obtain financing so that they can address some of their most pressing needs. Moreover, the program will create a significant number of well-paying jobs for Ohioans.

A highly regarded study conducted in 2009 by economists James Heintz and Robert Pollin of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, found that infrastructure investment spending in general creates about 18,000 total jobs for every \$1 billion in new investment spending. This number includes jobs directly created by hiring for specific construction projects, jobs indirectly created by supplier firms, and jobs induced when workers go out and spend their paychecks and boost their local economy.

Given that this 10-year extension of the State Capital Improvement Program will result in the investment of approximately \$2.5 billion in local infrastructure projects, a realistic estimate is that approximately 45,000 jobs will be produced by renewal of this program.

From our perspective, as engineering advisors to local governments, one of the most positive aspects of this program is that it empowers local officials to choose the projects in their jurisdictions that are most in need of funding. The 19 District Integrating Committees and the Ohio Public Works Commission, with the assistance of the OPWC staff, have done a creditable job of making sure that projects are selected for funding fairly and objectively.

In sum, the State Capital Improvement Program has been an unqualified success since its inception in 1987. We urge you to approve Senate Joint Resolution 4 so that, with the approval of Ohio voters next May, the program can continue without interruption.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to present our support for this important initiative. We are confident that, with your approval, Ohio's infrastructure will continue to flourish, benefiting both current and future generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Easterday

President

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