



**PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON S.J.R. 4  
SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

Chair Dolan, Vice Chair Cirino, and Ranking Member Sykes, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of Senate Joint Resolution 4, which would authorize the Ohio Public Works Commission to issue bonds to fund the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) for ten more years. My name is Sarah Biehl, and I am the Policy Director at the Ohio Mayors Alliance.

As you know, the Ohio Mayors Alliance is a bipartisan coalition of mayors in 31 of Ohio's largest cities and suburbs. Our mayors, along with other local government leaders across Ohio, rely on SCIP to fund crucial public infrastructure projects and upgrades. We strongly urge you to continue the bipartisan tradition of authorizing additional funding for SCIP before the end of 2024, so that the renewal can be placed before voters in May 2025, prior to the current funding's expiration in July 2025.

The SCIP has been renewed three times by bipartisan majorities in the General Assembly since its creation in the late 1980s. At its most recent renewal, in 2014, the Ohio Senate approved the renewal resolution 31-0, and the Ohio House of Representatives approved 90-2. We hope that this renewal will be supported by similar margins, and appreciate the bipartisan work of Senators Brian Chavez and Hearcel Craig to bring this before the Committee.

SJR 4 would authorize up to \$250 million in bonds over 10 years, for a total of \$2.5 billion in funding. This is a critical increase from the total of \$1.875 billion authorized in 2014, as projects face starkly increasing costs in 2024 and beyond. SCIP funds projects across our communities and throughout urban, suburban, and rural communities across Ohio. Its funds help counties, cities, villages, and townships, as well as water and sanitary districts, secure funding for essential infrastructure projects that improve Ohio's roads, bridges, culverts, water supply systems, wastewater systems, storm water collection systems, and solid waste disposal systems. Each of these projects is fundamental to ensuring a safe, productive, and robust quality of life for families and businesses in Ohio.

Our infrastructure improvement needs are dire, with crucial projects needed in every city in our membership to ensure that homes and businesses can thrive. Moreover, planning and implementing infrastructure projects is a long process that requires cities and state and local partners to be able to make quality estimates about what funding is and will be available. A pause in the availability of SCIP funds from the Public Works Commission would unnecessarily and harmfully delay projects that need to continue moving forward to keep Ohio running. Thus, we urge you to enact SJR 4 as quickly as possible so that this issue can go before Ohio voters next spring. Thank you.