



**SYMMES TOWNSHIP (HAMILTON COUNTY), OHIO
TRUSTEE PRESIDENT JODIE L. LEIS
OPPONENT TESTIMONY
HOUSE BILL 96
FINANCE COMMITTEE
MARCH 12, 2025**

CHAIRMAN STEWART, VICE CHAIR DOVILLA, RANKING MEMBER SWEENEY, AND
HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

My name is Jodie Leis, and I serve as President of the Symmes Township Board of Township Trustees. While I could not appear in person today, I firmly believe it is necessary on behalf of the Board of Trustees to offer testimony on House Bill 96, the Governor's proposed state operating budget for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027. My testimony focuses on the proposed elimination of excise tax revenue from local governments that host adult use marijuana dispensaries.

Symmes Township is situated in the northeast corner of Hamilton County. The Symmes Township Board of Trustees operates the Township government on an annual budget of approximately \$12,000,000. Symmes Township provides its residents and businesses with modern government services, including police protection through a contract with the Hamilton County Sheriff, and fire and EMS services through a contract with the Loveland Symmes Fire Department. A pioneer in shared services and outsourcing, Symmes Township operates a modern and responsive government with a minimal number of regular employees.

In 2023, we saw an opportunity to lessen the property tax burden for our residents and businesses with the passage of State Issue 2 which stipulated that a portion of the taxes collected on the sales of adult use cannabis would be distributed to host communities. The voters of Symmes Township and Hamilton County overwhelmingly supported the commercialization, regulation, legalization, and taxing of adult use cannabis. In keeping with the will of our constituents, the Board of Trustees passed a resolution to allow one

dispensary to locate within our community with the expectation that we would receive revenue in host community fees annually. That revenue would be used to support our General Fund thereby reducing the burden on our taxpayers.

Those who voted in favor of Issue 2 and local government officials who chose to allow dispensaries in their communities did so with the understanding that they would receive a portion of the tax dollars that will be garnered through the sale of marijuana. We respectfully ask you to ensure that funding for host communities remains as part of the law that voters approved.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony to this honorable committee.



Jodie L. Leis, President

Symmes Township Board of Township Trustees