

Chairman Stewart, Vice-Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeny, and members of the House Finance Committee. My name is Robbie Kehl, and I serve as the Fiscal Officer for Tuscarawas township in Coshocton County. On behalf of the Board of Trustees for Tuscarawas Township I would like to provide written testimony on HB 96, the state operating budget.

Tuscarawas Township has a population of about 1,800 people with Coshocton County having a population of about 37,000. You may be surprised to hear that Coshocton County voted 50-50 to pass Issue Two back in 2023. A vast majority of residents discussed the issue with Township officials from the 21 townships in the County and stated that they voted to pass the issue because they believed that the tax income from adult-use marijuana could benefit the communities, which is certainly true of our township. As of late 2024, there were about 120 dispensaries in Ohio that sold recreationally with 2 of those in Coshocton County and 1 in Tuscarawas Township. As you know, Townships receive the majority of their revenue from property taxes and from gasoline taxes. The average household income in Coshocton County is \$48,819, which is almost exactly half that of the average household income for the state of Ohio. The average home value in Coshocton County is \$157,264, or about \$70,000 less than the state's average value. These factors combine to provide fewer local resources to pave roads and take care of general maintenance which we are mandated to do.

HB 96 in its current form, removes the host community fund that provides revenue to the community that has a dispensary. Tuscarawas Township and our residents oppose this provision and respectfully ask this Committee to reinstate the fund at the level passed by the voters, 36% at the 10% excise tax. The people voted so that they could benefit our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. For any questions, please feel free to reach me at [Robbiekehl@yahoo.com](mailto:Robbiekehl@yahoo.com)

Tuscarawas Township, Coshocton County

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