Joint Sponsor Testimony

Local Government Committee

(HB 466 – "subdivision levies a property tax")

Chair **King**, Vice-Chair **Kishman**, Ranking Member **Sims**, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on **HB 466**.

This bill is a straightforward, commonsense measure designated to restore **accountability**, **transparency**, and **local control** in the levying of property taxes by political subdivisions in Ohio.

Under current law, certain subdivisions that are created by another local government entity - such as a **township**, **municipality**, or **country** - may independently pursue a property tax levy without the consent or approval of the very body that created them.

Here we are talking about entities like:

- Water & Sewer Districts
- Port Authorities
- Community Improvement Corporations
- Park Districts
- Among others

In practice, this can result in tax increases imposed on local residents WITHOUT meaningful oversights by their most directly accountable elected officials.

HB 466 addresses this gap.

This legislation simply requires that before a subdivision (like those I've just mentioned) may levy a property tax, it must first obtain approval from the creating authority. Nothing more—and nothing less.

The bill:

- Does not prohibit levies
- Does not eliminate existing subdivisions
- Does not interfere with voter approval requirements
- Does not mandate new taxes

Instead, it ensures that when a subordinate political entity seeks to raise property taxes, that decision receives review and approval from the elected body that established it and that remains directly answerable to taxpayers.

Property taxes represent one of the most **direct and burdensome forms of taxation** for Ohio families, seniors on fixed incomes, and small businesses.

Taxpayers reasonably expect that decisions to increase those taxes will be made with **full transparency and democratic accountability**.

When a subdivision operates independently of its creating authority for tax purposes, accountability is lost.

HB466 restores a clear chain of responsibility by ensuring that:

- Taxing decisions receive deliberation by elected officials closest to the people
- Local governments retain oversight over entities they created
- Taxpayers gain clarity about who is responsible for tax increases

This bill reinforces the principle that **taxing power should not be separated from political accountability**.

Importantly, HB 466 respects local government authority.

- It does not impose a one-size-fits-all solution from Columbus.
- Instead, it empowers local legislative bodies—townships, counties, and municipalities—to exercise oversight consistent with their knowledge of local conditions and taxpayer capacity.

In short, this bill strengthens—not weakens—local governance.

House Bill 466 is about **good government**.

It promotes responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, reinforces accountability, and ensures that property tax decisions are made with appropriate oversight.

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of HB 466 and would be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the Committee.