

**Testimony of Linda Bailiff, Director  
Ohio Public Works Commission**

**House Transportation Committee  
Wednesday, February 5, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chairman Willis, Vice-Chairman Daniels, Ranking Member Grim, and Committee members. I am Linda Bailiff, Director of the Ohio Public Works Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Commission's FY 26-27 Biennial Budget request.

The Commission helps local governments in all of Ohio's 88 counties build necessary and critical infrastructure that communities depend on every day. The Commission was created in 1988 to administer the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP). This program is authorized through amendments to the Ohio Constitution to allow the State to use its general revenues as debt support to issue general obligation bonds for local government roads, bridges, water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste disposal, and storm water systems. Allocations are distributed to 19 public works district integrating committees made up of local officials who review, score and rank project applications. The OPWC, in turn, creates and administers project agreements and pays the OPWC's share of eligible project costs.

In 1990, the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP) was created and funded by one cent of the 28-cent motor vehicle fuel tax levy distributed under ORC 5735.05. LTIP provides funds for about 300 road and bridge projects biennially. The Commission administers the SCIP and LTIP consecutively as a single annual infrastructure program.

Each spring the Commission releases allocations to the district integrating committees. The LTIP allocations are based on projected fuel tax receipts not exceeding the Commission's appropriated budget amount. Due to higher than expected revenue and interest earnings in the last two years, the Commission is requesting a slight increase for program appropriations to support cash receipts. The allocations released to the districts for the current biennial budget were less than actual revenue received; therefore, the OPWC has a slight surplus to use for this upcoming budget.

The Commission's request contains funding for operating the SCIP, the Clean Ohio Conservation program, also supported by bond funds, and the LTIP. The request also includes debt service for both SCIP and Clean Ohio, and program funds for the LTIP. These items will

allow the Commission to continue to assist with the needs of Ohio's local governments.

The Commission's total operating budget - administrative, maintenance, and equipment - is prorated between the three programs, 60% SCIP, 20% Clean Ohio, and 20% LTIP. This budget retains all nine existing staff that manage the three programs, including ongoing maintenance for the WorksWise customer cloud platform. The Commission has more than 1,500 active infrastructure projects, 250 active Clean Ohio projects, and a portfolio of more than 3,400 loans.

Although capital funds for SCIP and Clean Ohio are authorized by capital budgets, SCIP is in its last year of its current 10-ten year bonding authorization for which the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly approved a ballot issue for voter consideration in this upcoming May election. The Commission is appreciative of the Ohio General Assembly's support of this critical program.

With me is Abbey DeHart, our Chief Financial Officer, and we are pleased to respond to any questions.