

65th House District:

Part of Ashtabula County
Part of Trumbull County

Committees:

Ways and Means, Vice Chair
Arts, Athletics and Tourism
Energy
Public Insurance and Pensions



Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center
77 South High Street 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: (614) 466- 3488
Rep65@ohiohouse.gov
<https://ohiohouse.gov/>

David Thomas

State Representative for the 65th House District

Property Tax Relief Now Act HB 335 Sponsor Testimony Before the Ohio House Ways & Means Committee June 11, 2025

Chair Roemer, Ranking Member Troy, and fellow members of the House Ways and Means Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 335, the Property Tax Relief Now Act. Thank you, Chair Roemer, for hearing this bill right away.

Ohio's property taxpayers are at a tipping point. For 5 years they have seen spikes in unvoted property taxes and have demanded reforms to the system. Because property taxes, the largest tax paid by Ohioans at roughly \$22 Billion, all stay at the local level and because we have already given local governments the tools to relieve the property owner, there has been a tug of war in a sense between the legislature and local governments over what is to be done and how to fix the problem.

The legislature has consistently said it is a local issue. The local governments have consistently said it is a state issue. This stalemate has led to gridlock and while some action has been taken over the last 5 years, the taxpayer has still been left with spikes in unvoted taxes and local governments have still collected in these tax increases while bold policy change from Columbus has been unattainable. We cannot afford to continue this.

Today I present to you the boldest, most transformational property tax reform package in half a century with the goals of:

- Providing \$3.5 Billion of direct property tax relief to every Ohioan in January 2026 by eliminating the unvoted inside millage portion to Counties, Schools, Villages, and Cities
- Separate property values from property tax increases addressing the tax on unrealized gain concern

- Rebalance the burden placed on the property owner with the tools local governments already have but are not using
- Empower the county budget commission to limit tax rates and oversee budgets
- Limit school's 20 Mill Floor revenue to inflation
- Lift many schools off the 20 Mill floor by including their other levies into the calculation
- Provide a permissive, opt-in Local Homestead Piggyback Program to give additional local relief to seniors and those on Homestead

These goals provide property tax relief and reform now, in January, and into the future. As I have traveled the state, I have asked local governments to use their other forms of revenue to provide local services including sales and income tax in addition to cutting spending, instead of relying heavily on property taxes. I have been met with refusal, skepticism, and calls for higher state taxes to subsidize growing local property taxes.

I firmly believe Ohioans sending more money to Columbus, in the hopes of those tax dollars coming back to their local governments to subsidize growing local taxes is not tax relief or reform, is it big government taking more, growing more, and incentivizing higher and higher taxes for all.

That is why this plan keeps tax dollars local and forces a new perspective for how we fund our local services. The mentality should not be one of defaulting to the property owner bearing the burden. That has gotten us to where we are today, Ohioans over the last 5 years seeing billions in unvoted property tax increases despite not approving these increases.

The best time for this bill was June 2020. Legislation then would have prevented the current crisis that we now must solve. The second-best time is June 2025 to stop what is coming in January 2026 and after.

With passage of HB 335:

- In July 2025 County Budget Commissions will review budgets and begin limiting tax rates.
- In January 2026
 - Ohioans will see a \$3.5 Billion property tax cut with the removal of County, City, Village, and School inside millage.
 - Ohioans will have the tax spikes from 30% value increases eliminated or negligible as they will be tied to inflation for 20 Mill floor schools.
 - Homestead recipients could have an extra Homestead Piggyback

saving an additional \$450 on average for those eligible in counties wishing to participate.

- Many schools will no longer be at the 20 Mill Floor
- In the future
 - Value increases are separated from Tax Increases with the voters in control of their property tax bills.

Our residents simply cannot afford for us to do nothing, they cannot afford for us to only tackle one aspect of the property tax system, they need us to have courage and address the tax system head on in a lasting way. HB 335 does this and more.

I am happy to take questions and am grateful for the opportunity, Chair Roemer.