

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: June 16, 2025

Name: Christopher R. Modranski

Are you representing: Yourself ☐ Organization ☒

Organization (If Applicable): Carroll County Commissioners

Position/Title: Vice President (Commissioner)

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Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes ☒ No ☐

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 335

Specific Issue: Elimination of Inside Millage

Are you testifying as a: Proponent ☐ Opponent ☒ Interested Party ☐

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? Written Testimony Only

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

Ohio House Bill 335 and the elimination of inside millage would absolutely destroy Carroll County's ability to provide adequate protection and services to its constituents. If you read my testimony, you will see how devastating this HB 335 is to our county and counties like ours.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.



Carroll County Commissioners

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Commissioners

*Donald E. Leggett II * Christopher R. Modranski * Robert E. Wirkner*

June 16, 2025

Dear Chairman Bill Roemer, Vice Chairman David Thomas, Ranking Member Daniel P. Troy and Committee Members,

I am writing to express our firm and unequivocal opposition to House Bill 335. If enacted, this bill would decimate Carroll County's General Fund by more than 22%, slashing over \$4 million from our budget. Let us be absolutely clear: HB 335 is not just misguided—it is dangerous.

Carroll County, like many rural counties across Ohio, provides essential services that residents of all ages depend on every single day. A cut of this magnitude is nothing short of a direct attempt to defund law enforcement, gut emergency services, undermine public health, and dismantle the foundational operations of county government.

This bill would wreak havoc on our ability to serve the public. Everything from public safety and veteran services to road maintenance and election administration would be weakened, delayed, or eliminated. Our justice system will also suffer. The courts, clerk of courts, and prosecutor's office—critical pillars of public safety—depend on the General Fund. These cuts would directly compromise our ability to prosecute crimes, uphold the rule of law, and ensure timely access to justice. Criminals don't wait for balanced budgets, and neither can the justice system.

And make no mistake: public safety is squarely in the crosshairs. HB 335 threatens the salaries and staffing levels of our sheriff's department and 911 dispatchers. That means longer response times, fewer deputies on patrol, and greater risk for every man, woman, and child in Carroll County. If this bill becomes law, the State of Ohio will bear direct responsibility for putting its citizens in danger.

In addition to these core services, the General Fund supports a wide range of local initiatives that benefit our entire community. The following is a non-exhaustive list of programs that would lose funding if HB 335 is enacted: the Agricultural Society, Airport, Child Support Enforcement (county share), Economic Development, Health Department (Tuberculosis and Vital Statistics), Law Library, Memorial Day Fund, OSU Extension (including 4-H), Regional Planning Commission, Soil and Water Conservation District, Transit, and Victims Assistance. These aren't luxuries—they are part of what keeps rural Ohio functioning.

One of the most troubling aspects of this bill is the unrealistic assumption that voters will simply approve new taxes to make up for the lost funding. Once inside millage is returned to property

owners, it is incredibly unlikely that voters will turn around and approve a levy to re-fund basic services. That may sound good in theory, but in practice, it's just a backdoor way of telling counties to eliminate services and "live within your means"—which, in this case, means doing without.

HB 335 has pointed to tools like sales tax as a potential offset, but the bill fundamentally misunderstands the economic landscape of counties like Carroll. We don't have shopping malls or large retail outlets. Our residents don't purchase big-ticket items on a regular basis. Outside of occasional vehicle purchases—which aren't taxed the same way as groceries or everyday essentials—there's simply not enough economic activity to generate meaningful sales tax revenue. The "tools" referred to are hollow if there's nothing to use them on.

The bill also ignores the historical foundation of this funding structure. Since the 1930s, property tax has been a stable, reliable source of revenue precisely because it is immune to the volatility of consumer spending. This system was never designed to be optional or temporary—it was meant to ensure that counties could plan and provide core government functions, no matter the economic climate.

What's more, the cost of doing business—just like in the private sector—has gone up. Jail food, fuel, fleet vehicles, building maintenance, insurance, software licensing, contractual services—all of it has increased. Wages must keep pace with inflation just as they do in the private sector. HB 335 doesn't just ignore that reality; it actively makes it worse. It strips away funding while doing nothing to lower costs.

If the legislature is serious about tax relief, there are smarter ways to go about it. Cap the rate of property value increases during each six-year reappraisal. That provides certainty for taxpayers without bankrupting the local governments that serve them.

House Bill 335 is not reform. It's a reckless, one-size-fits-none attack on the backbone of local government. It fixes nothing. It simply pushes the burden onto rural counties that are already operating on tight margins and doing more with less.

We urge you to reject this legislation in full. The people of Carroll County deserve better. They deserve a government that can protect their families, respond in a crisis, uphold the law, and sustain the services that make Ohio work.

HB 335 is not the answer. It must be stopped.

For the Board of Commissioners of Carroll County, Ohio



Christopher R. Modranski, Vice President