

**Opponent Testimony**  
**HB 335: Regards county budget commissions, property and sales tax, funds**  
**Emily A. Keeler – Council President, City of Grandview Heights**

**June 18, 2025**

Good morning Honorable Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and all members of the Ways and Means Committee. My name is Emily Keeler and I serve as Council President in the City of Grandview Heights. I am here today to testify about HB 335 and its negative impacts on Grandview Heights.

Our City is approximately 1.2 square miles with a population of just over 9,000. We are the smallest full-service city in the State of Ohio, and we work hard to provide a safe and enjoyable place for our residents, businesses, and visitors. I and my colleagues were alarmed to hear of the proposal to eliminate inside millage. For Grandview Heights, we receive \$1.2 million annually from these dollars and they are directed to police, fire, EMS, refuse pickup, and recreational services. They are integral to the City for ensuring the safety of our residents and staff, improving infrastructure, parks, and basic safety services. I think we would all agree, these are integral components of any city. Our number one task is the safety of those within our borders.

To put these cuts into perspective, the elimination of inside millage for us would equate to 6% of our annual General Fund budget. Each year we aim to put \$1 million into roads and infrastructure projects. These cuts would eliminate our entire program PLUS some. If we keep the roads, what should we cut – Police? Fire? EMS? Parks?

These cuts will severely destabilize our revenues, and by association, our services and create negative impacts to how we can provide said services. Contrary to some opinions, to maintain the City's already limited level of services and replace \$1.2 million of its total annual projected 2025 revenue of \$20.7 million we would be required to escalate taxes by substantially increasing our current 2.5% income tax levy or increase our 7.5 voted millage. This, at a time when the City is already planning for future needs like the unfunded federally mandated obligation to replace all lead water service lines before 2037.

While I appreciate the concept of wanting to lower property taxes, this won't actually help. We still need police and fire and parks. We still need to replace lead

lines and repair roads. All it does is require more levies and tax increases in other ways, creating a huge uncertainty for residents. H.B. 335 would devastate local services and create tax volatility for residents if we must continually run levies and increase taxes to recapture the value needed to deliver essential services that will be lost due to this legislation. This is why I strongly urge this committee to remove the inside millage elimination and work with all impacted parties to find solutions that work for everyone.

Thank you for your time.