



**City of Blue Ash**  
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**David M. Waltz**  
*City Manager*



June 17, 2025

The Honorable Senator Steve Wilson  
Ohio Senate, District 7  
1 Capitol Square  
Second Floor, Suite 222  
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Representative Karen Brownlee  
Ohio House of Representatives, District 28  
77 South High Street  
Tenth Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Wilson and Representative Brownlee,

On behalf of the City Council of Blue Ash, I want to express my strong opposition to House Bill 335, the "Property Tax Relief Now Act," currently under consideration by the Ohio General Assembly.

While we support meaningful reforms that provide property tax relief to Ohio residents, HB 335 proposes provisions that would have a detrimental impact on our local government and its ability to serve the residents of Blue Ash. Specifically, we are concerned with the bill's elimination of unvoted inside millage and the expanded authority it grants to county budget commissions.

#### **Concerns Regarding Elimination of Inside Millage:**

- Inside millage is an essential source of revenue for municipalities like ours, funding critical local services such as police, fire, emergency medical services, road maintenance, and parks. The elimination of inside millage would reduce the City's annual budget by \$3.25M and impact three TIF revenue supported bonds by \$150K each year.
- This drastic measure would harm local governments' ability to provide services without the ability to raise taxes through votes of the electorate. It effectively undermines our local fiscal autonomy and forces us into a situation where we must rely more heavily on state funding or alternative revenue sources such as income tax, which may not adequately replace lost revenue.

#### **Concerns Regarding County Budget Commissions:**

- HB 335's provision to **expand the authority of county budget commissions** raises serious concerns. These commissions, which are often not well-known to the public, would gain the power to limit local tax rates, revise municipal budgets, and reduce tax levies based on their review. This level of control over local budgets should remain with municipal officials, who are most directly accountable to our constituents.
- This would create a loss of local control over how we allocate resources, potentially putting vital services in jeopardy and creating confusion about fiscal policies that were previously managed by our local government.

We respectfully urge you to oppose HB 335 in its current form. While we agree that property tax reform is necessary, we believe this bill oversteps the bounds of local autonomy and would significantly harm municipalities and their residents. Instead, we encourage the Legislature to pursue a balanced approach that addresses property tax concerns while maintaining the ability of local governments to manage their own budgets and levy taxes.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate your service to the people of Ohio and trust that you will consider the negative implications of HB 335 on our local governments and the municipalities you represent. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Harrington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly Harrington  
Assistant City Manager