



# SUMMIT COUNTY COUNCIL

June 17, 2025

The Honorable Representative Bill Roemer, Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
77 South High Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: Summit County Council's Opposition to House Bill 335

Dear Representative Roemer,

The purpose of this letter is to express our opposition to House Bill 335, the "Property Tax Relief Now Act," in its current form. While we support thoughtful property tax relief for Ohio residents, this legislation poses severe and immediate fiscal challenges that will significantly undermine Summit County's ability to provide essential public services.

House Bill 335 proposes a fundamental restructuring of Ohio's property tax system by eliminating inside millage authority for counties, a funding mechanism that has been in effect since the 1800s. For Summit County, this translates directly to an estimated loss of \$40 million to our general fund.

Unlike every other county in Ohio, Summit County cannot raise its permissive sales tax without a vote of the electorate. We operate our county on a 1/2 percent sales tax and are the only county in the state that must seek the approval of voters to raise it, even within the permissive level. During the Great Recession we eliminated over 1,000 jobs to balance our budget and we never restored them. This means we will not have the ability to respond quickly to this proposed fiscal emergency. The loss of another \$40 million will leave us with no ability to comply with the very mandates the state requires us to uphold.

House Bill 335 would impair the ability of our Summit County Sheriff to provide adequate policing services to the communities they serve, it would restrict their ability to maintain the county jail at full operating capacity, it would necessitate cutbacks to emergency dispatch services resulting in slower response times, and it would hamper their ability to respond to critical incidents and emergencies. Additionally, House Bill 335 would effectively eliminate the operations of our Veterans Service Commission – abandoning veterans who served their country honorably and leaving them without vital services.

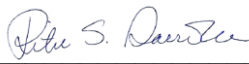
We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts to reform Ohio's property tax system. However, we urge you to consider the unintended consequences of HB 335. Public safety, access to justice, and core community services will be deeply and unavoidably impacted. We ask for your partnership in identifying a more balanced solution that protects both taxpayers and the fundamental services they rely upon. The County Auditors' Association of Ohio's proposal for property tax relief is a strong option to consider. We also support capping growth for inside millage.

In Summit County, we operate with remarkable fiscal responsibility. We have the lowest sales tax and the lowest operating budget per capita in the State of Ohio. Yet, despite our fiscal responsibility, we are being

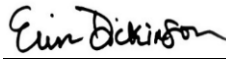
threatened with punishment through the passage of HB 335 and the devastating cuts that would come with it, with safety services poised to suffer the biggest losses.

In summary, House Bill 335, in its present form, presents a fiscal risk to Summit County and its residents. We urge you to oppose this legislation and instead collaborate with local government stakeholders to develop truly sustainable and equitable property tax reforms. We are available to provide further information and discuss these critical concerns at your convenience

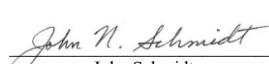
Sincerely,



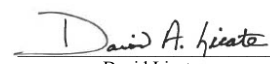
Rita Darrow  
Council President  
District 1 Council Member



Erin Dickinson  
Council Vice President  
At Large Council Member



John Schmidt  
District 2 Council Member



David Licata  
District 3 Council Member



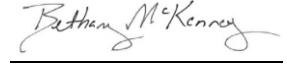
Jeffrey Wilhite  
District 4 Council Member



Brandon Ford  
District 5 Council Member



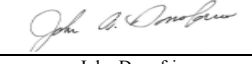
Christine Higham  
District 6 Council Member



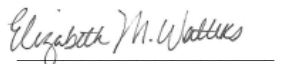
Bethany McKenney  
District 7 Council Member



Joseph Kacyon  
District 8 Council Member



John Donofrio  
At Large Council Member



Elizabeth Walters  
At Large Council Member

Cc; Sen. Kristina Roegner, District 27  
Sen. Casey Weinstein, District 28  
Rep. Jack Daniels, District 32  
Rep. Veronica Sims, District 33  
Rep. Derrick Hall, District 34  
Rep. Steve Demetriou, District 35

☞ Ohio's First Charter County ☞

175 S. Main Street · 7<sup>th</sup> Floor · Akron · Ohio · 44308-1314

T: (330) 643-2725 · F: (330) 643-2531 · Northern Summit County: (800) 582-2699

[www.co.summit.oh.us](http://www.co.summit.oh.us)