



June 17, 2025

The Honorable Bill Roemer, Chair
Ohio House Ways & Means Committee
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chair Roemer, Vice-Chair Troy, Ranking Member Brown, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing regarding House Bill 335, the “Property Tax Relief NOW Act.” I appreciate Representative David Thomas and your Republican caucus for looking at steps toward modernizing Ohio’s unconstitutional property-tax system, and I equally thank the Democratic members for recognizing the very real inequities that have grown under the current framework. A frank, bipartisan conversation is overdue.

As Mayor of the Village of Bratenahl I must share how HB 335, in its present form, would jeopardize our residents’ health, safety, and welfare.

Financial impact on Bratenahl

Bratenahl receives four of the ten unvoted (“inside”) mills the Ohio Constitution currently allows. Eliminating them on January 1, 2026, would erase over \$508,000 a year – about 15 percent of our \$5 million General Fund. After Cuyahoga County’s 2024 reappraisal takes effect, the annual loss could approach over \$700,000.

Consequences for essential services

Losing that revenue virtually overnight would force immediate layoffs. Those reductions would lengthen emergency-response times (we rely on our police to arrive ahead of contract Fire/EMS units), cut critical public works services, including road, sewer, and infrastructure repairs. Simply put, the bill would deliver a tax cut at the direct expense of critical public safety and basic infrastructure in communities like ours.

A constructive path forward

We share your goal of easing the burden on homeowners, and we stand ready to help design a durable solution. I respectfully ask the Committee to pause final action on HB 335 and convene a stakeholder work group that includes municipalities, counties, townships, and school districts to consider other alternatives or compromises (including possibly exempting the first four or five mills that support core operations).

Ohio works best when state and local officials solve problems together. On behalf of Bratenahl's residents, I urge you to invite us to the table and craft reforms that lower taxes responsibly while preserving the public services every Ohioan deserves.

Thank you for your consideration. I am happy to answer any questions and to participate in further discussions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Keith Benjamin".

Keith A. Benjamin
Mayor, Village of Bratenahl

