

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 11/3/25

Name: Randy Lewis, Chuck Hayslip, John Easter, Matt Gray, Reggie Carrington, Danny Liston

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): Brusk Creek, Green, Sprigg, and Jefferson Township

Position/Title: Township Trustee

Address: 1273 West Fork Rd

City: Stout State: OH Zip: 45684

Best Contact Telephone: 937-549-2160 Email: _____

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

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB540

Specific Issue: Payment in Lieu of Taxes

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? 5 mins

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

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.

Adams County Ohio Coalition of Township Trustees for HB540

Sprigg, Green Township, and Jefferson Townships

November 3, 2025

Representative Justin Pizzulli

Ohio House of Representatives

77 South High Street

Columbus, OH 43215

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, and Ranking Member Troy and all members of the Ohio House Ways and Means Committee,

On behalf of the Brush Creek Green, Sprigg, and Jefferson Township Board of Trustees, I want to express our full support for House Bill 540, your legislation to require payments in lieu of taxes from large conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy.

My name is Randy Lewis and I am a trustee for Brush Creek Township. Our township, like many in Adams County, carries the day-to-day costs of maintaining public infrastructure on land that generates no tax revenue. When an organization owns thousands of acres of tax-exempt property, it doesn't remove the responsibility we have to maintain roads, culverts, ditches, signage, and emergency access routes that cross and serve that land. The fuel for our equipment, the gravel for the roads, and the labor hours of our road crews all come from the same small general fund that's supported by local taxpayers. Those taxpayers are paying more each year to make up the difference, and it's not sustainable.

In the case of The Nature Conservancy, much of their property is remote, hilly, and accessed by township roads that require frequent maintenance due to heavy erosion, runoff, and the wear caused by increased traffic during hunting and hiking seasons. We also provide emergency response access and coordinate with fire departments and law enforcement when incidents occur on or near their property, all without any contribution from the landowner.

House Bill 540 would give our township a small but meaningful way to recover a portion of those costs. Even a modest payment in lieu of taxes would allow us to:

- Improve gravel and chip-seal roads that run through or border conservation land.
- Upgrade drainage systems and culverts that are failing due to runoff from unmanaged forest areas.
- Support our volunteer fire departments that frequently respond to emergencies in these remote areas.
- Replace aging equipment used to maintain access roads and provide public safety coverage.

If passed, the funds generated through this legislation would be invested directly back into the community and the infrastructure that supports both residents and visitors alike.

We appreciate your leadership in addressing an issue that has long gone unspoken in southern Ohio. We believe this legislation strikes a fair balance, preserving our natural lands while also respecting the needs of the people who live and work beside them every day.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the townships of Adams County and to the hardworking families we represent.

Sincerely,

Randy Lewis - Brusk Creek Township Trustee

Chuck Hayslip - Sprigg Township Trustee

John Easter - Green Township Trustee

Matt Gray - Former Green Township Trustee

Reggie Carrington - Former Sprigg Township Trustee

Danny Liston - Jefferson Township Trustee

Adams County, Ohio

