

THE OFFICE OF
CLINTON COUNTY ENGINEER
JEFFREY B. LINKOUS, P.E., P.S.

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TO:

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an Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Minority Member Antonio
Transportation Committee Members

FROM: Jeffrey B. Linkous, P.E., P.S.

DATE: March 22, 2021

**RE: Sub HB 74, Transportation Budget
FORCE ACCOUNT limits increase - SUPPORT**

County: Clinton

Budget: \$ 7.2 million

I am writing to express my support for Sub. House Bill 74, the Transportation Budget, particularly the addition of the language increasing county and other local government force account limits.

- 1) Under the current legislation, we are unable to replace smaller bridges in Clinton County that we have been able to replace in the past with our own forces. Force account limits have not been increased since 2003, although construction material costs have increased between 44 and 220 percent. Considering the increased construction costs, these limits should be adjusted to \$300,000 for bridges and \$150,000 for roads with an annual inflation factor.
- 2) Our County bridge crew is very capable of doing everything from maintenance on our bridges to complete replacements. Beginning back in the 1980's, we have been able to replace and reconstruct 250 of our 294 bridges on the county system. While we contracted out some of the larger bridges, most of these were completed with County forces. We are very proud of our success, quality and quantity of our improvements. We would not be able to accomplish this today due to the constraint of the Force Account Limits.
- 3) We have a limited number of contractors willing to bid on some of the smaller projects being constructed. We will continue to contract the intermediate and larger projects, while we focus on the smaller ones.
- 4) We will still bid out over \$1 million in safety projects each year and another \$1-1.5 million in paving and resurfacing contracts.
- 5) The Clinton County taxpayers benefit from the efficiency of our forces maintaining roads and building bridges. We have been able to use our cost-savings to stretch our money and do more work on our highway system.

Thank you for your consideration of increasing the force account limits that will continue to allow County Engineers to be able to better serve our constituents in the most efficient way.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey B. Linkous, P.E, P.S.
Clinton County Engineer