

# CLERMONT COUNTY AUDITOR

Linda L. Fraley, Clermont County Auditor

Chair John, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 101.

My name is Linda Fraley and I currently serve as the Clermont County Auditor. House Bill 101 is a legislative package that we believe will make local governments lives easier when a village ultimately dissolves. By background, in November 2019, the village of Amelia in Clermont County voted to dissolve. 68 percent of the voters in Amelia decided to dissolve the village government. As you can imagine a transition for which local governments then inherit the services is very daunting.

Amelia became part of Batavia Township and Pierce Township. The Ohio State Auditor oversaw the transition period that took months to complete. Current state law requires officials to divide property within 60 days but sets no hard deadline for the Ohio Auditor to issue a final report on the dissolution.

Having gone through this, it became very clear that the Ohio Revised Code needed updated in efforts to better clarify how to dissolve a village going forward. The County Auditors Association of Ohio worked with Representative Bird in finding updated changes for when a village dissolves going forward.

Once it is decided that the dissolution will occur, the following takes immediate effect:

- The village ceases to exist and its officials cease to hold office.
- All laws of the village are extinguished; no new laws can take effect.
- A "Transition Supervisory Board" is created, consisting of the county auditor, county prosecutor, and county recorder.
- The Auditor of State begins a final audit of the dissolved village.
- The territory of the village becomes part of the township or townships in which the village was located, along existing township boundaries.
- All leases terminate as specified in the respective lease agreements.
- Prescribes the procedures during transitional period related to Taxes, debt, real and personal property, utilities, public records, CICs, SIDs, TIFS, LGF.

The intent of HB 101 is not to change the process to dissolve but rather to aid in an expedited transition once a village has dissolved.

Chair and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to talk about the benefits of HB101, in efforts to streamline the process going forward for when a village is dissolved here in Ohio. I would welcome any comments/questions from members of the committee.