



January 12, 2024

Chairwoman John, Vice-Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan and Members of the House State and Local Government Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on House Bill 315, proposing common sense modifications to Ohio law as it relates to Ohio Townships. My name is Barry Tiffany and I have the pleasure of serving as the Administrator for Sugar Creek Township, Greene County, Ohio. Additionally, I serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee for the Coalition of Large Ohio Urban Townships (CLOUT).

Townships in the State of Ohio have, and continue to provide opportunities for economic development, both commercial and residential, and do so despite the lack of parity with the economic development tools available to our neighboring municipalities. Townships spend, tax, and borrow less and have the available land area, expertise and desire to support the State of Ohio's proven track record of job creation. The provisions included in House Bill 315 will not only make doing business in our communities easier, but they will reinforce the State's continued commitment to growing our economy and strive to improve the quality of life for township residents in the State of Ohio. Townships are uniquely situated to absorb new residential and commercial growth in the State of Ohio, growth that is necessary to ensure Ohio's continued prosperity.

Thank you for the opportunity to explain the impact of some specific provisions of House Bill 315 on our ability to support the success of this great State.


Public Notice

This legislation allows public notice to be posted on a township's website or social media rather than in a newspaper. Newspaper publication schedules and lead time for publication often delay project reviews so that statutory notice requirements can be met. Delays can be extremely problematic for projects working within the confines of tight schedules and even tighter proformas. Additionally, we hear from our constituents a preference to move from newspaper publication to mediums like our website and social media, more accessible and with more reach. This is a good government, modern, common-sense provision. House Bill 33, the state operating budget smartly allowed municipalities this ability, townships ask for parity.

New Community Authority

New Community Authorities (NCA) have helped accomplish development needs across the state. NCAs have helped finance roads, industrial, commercial, and residential projects and have ushered in projects that otherwise would not have been possible. House Bill 33 gave townships with a population of at least 5,000 within counties with populations of at least 200,000 and no more than 400,000 (Butler, Clermont, Delaware, Lake, Lorain, Stark, and Warren) to create an NCA. This

Marvin Moeller, Trustee  Fred Cramer, Trustee  Carolyn L. Destefani, Trustee

2090 Ferry Road, Sugar Creek, Ohio 45305-2003  Phone: (937) 848-8426

legislation extends the ability to townships with populations of 15,000 in the unincorporated area should the voters choose to do so. Townships need more tools to meet the development goals of the community and the state. This ability will help keep the tax dollars that originated from the township, in the township.

Comprehensive Plan Updates

Comprehensive plans and land use plans are guides for future decision-making, and future policy decisions. Today's economic/business climate has dictated a need for continuous and regular review of township comprehensive plans, given the amount of development and change occurring in townships across the state. However, without a revenue source, some jurisdictions delay these reviews or undertake them on a shoestring budget. To help develop and grow Ohio, the Governor proposed monies in the Executive version of House Bill 33, the state operating budget, to modernize and streamline this process. This provision re-establishes the fund and invests in our local communities and the state to foster growth, and development. Our ask is \$1.5 million per fiscal year for this provision – the same as the Governor's request in HB 33.

Township License Plate

While the state, counties, and municipalities have plates specific to their jurisdictional category on their vehicles, townships do not. This legislation would allow townships to have a township license plate instead of a county license plate. Township vehicles are not county vehicles. With over 41,000 centerline miles to maintain, the most in the state, the township-specific plates would help to further identify township vehicles on the road. The ability for our staff members to be properly identified by the public as township employees is important. We see this provision as a housekeeping issue that warrants addressing.

I want to thank Representatives Hall and Seitz for sponsoring this legislation on behalf of township residents in Ohio. Speaking for the 63 CLOUT townships in Ohio, we respectfully request your support of House Bill 315. Madame Chair, thank you for the opportunity to provide input. I am happy to address any questions that you or your committee members may have.

Sincerely,



Barry Tiffany

Sugarcreek Township Administrator and CLOUT Executive Board Chair