

# COUNTY LEADER



County Commissioners Association of Ohio quarterly magazine

Fall 2022



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1) Fayette County Commissioners Dan Dean, Tony Anderson, James Garland and Logan County Commissioner Joe Antram with State Senator Bob Peterson after it was announced that Honda will be constructing an electric vehicle battery plant in Fayette County

2) Guernsey County Commissioners Jack Marlin and Dave Wilson with Assistant Director of Guernsey County Job & Family Services, Sue Thomas Sikora at the 2022 CCAO Workforce, Families & Children Symposium

3) Hamilton County Commissioners Alicia Reece, Stephanie Summerow Dumas and Denise Driehaus, who is also CCAO Executive Committee Secretary, at The White House for Communities in Action: Building a Better Ohio in September

On the cover: Lt. Gov. Jon Husted who visited with the Board of Directors at their September meeting

## A MESSAGE FROM 2022 CCAO PRESIDENT DEBBIE LIEBERMAN, MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSIONER

It's hard to believe the year is passing quickly by, but one step outside amid the changing fall leaves and the chilling temperatures are proof enough that 2022 is dwindling away right in front of us. It's also an opportunity to reflect on what we accomplished over the course of the year and to take stock of what challenges and opportunities still await.



Without a doubt, 2022 has been an exciting year of well-earned victories for county government. Counties have been at the forefront in investing federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds across the state. These one-time funds are making possible projects and initiatives that had long been out of reach for many counties. From expanding broadband service to constructing water and sewer infrastructure, to supporting small businesses, affordable housing, child care, and much more, there is much to be excited about in our counties.

Similarly, counties across the state look forward to putting federal infrastructure funds to work rebuilding bridges and roadways, funding broadband expansion, investing in our airports and ports, and improving public water and sewer systems, just to name a few.

At the statehouse, the CCAO policy team as well as many CCAO members worked hard to achieve a number of our legislative goals for the year, including securing additional state funding for county jails. This year's capital budget marked the second consecutive capital appropriations bill that contained \$50 million for county jail construction and renovation. We are happy to see this key state-county partnership revived and look forward to expanding it in years to come.

Although the calendar continues to inch closer to the end of the year and the November General Election, there is still a lot of work to do during the upcoming lame duck session of the General Assembly, and we need all members engaged with their lawmakers during the last critical weeks of the year. The policy team is working hard to pass Next Generation 9-1-1 legislation, which would greatly improve Ohio's outdated 9-1-1 system and providing the necessary funding for counties to both implement and operate this technology. The team is also working to secure funding for replacing electronic poll books for county boards of elections, relieving counties of much of this funding burden. It is critical that our membership pull together during the lame duck session to achieve these goals and more.

Taking a look ahead at the year to come, the need for continued county advocacy is even more apparent. The biennial budget process will start early next year, and counties have ambitious goals to achieve. These include continued support for full indigent defense reimbursement, additional funding for county jail construction and operations and a restoration of the Local Government Fund, as well as promoting other key areas like child care, housing, workforce, transportation and more. It's a bold agenda and one that will require counties to make their case vigorously to the administration and General Assembly. I have every confidence we will do so.

This issue marks my last as CCAO President. It truly has been an honor to serve the members of CCAO and further the important work of our association. I certainly have not done it alone though. From the association staff to each individual member, the successes that we achieved are your successes. I thank you again for the privilege to build stronger counties for a stronger Ohio.



## CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference

December 7-9, 2022 | Franklin County



*Innovation and Inspiration to Shape Ohio's Future*

### **THE 2022 CCAO/CEAO WINTER CONFERENCE IS COMING SOON - SIGN UP TODAY!**

The County Commissioners Association of Ohio and County Engineers Association of Ohio invite you to the 2022 Annual Winter Conference on Dec. 7 through 9, at the Hyatt Regency Columbus, 350 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43215.

The CCAO staff is planning a number of interesting sessions packed with vital information for local leaders, including challenges in jails, workforce development projects, and the future of solar, wind and transportation infrastructure. You'll also get a chance to meet the new CCAO members at their orientation. A list of the tentative schedule can be found [here](#).

We have a great line up of sessions for this year's conference. Click [here](#) to learn more about the conference! There will be a variety of music this year including Bears on Unicycles, featuring CCAO's very own Operations Manager Tim Hoverman as the drummer! If you prefer to print a copy of the registration forms for affiliate associations, click [here](#).

For the county registration and additional exhibitor or sponsors form click [here](#) and for the spouse or guest registration form click [here](#).

# A UNITED VOICE: LETTER FROM CCAO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHERYL SUBLER

While the days are growing shorter and the year is winding down, the energy only seems to be building at CCAO. It's an exciting time to lead the association, and that is possible only through the continued efforts and support of the entire CCAO membership and staff. Regarding staff, I am happy to share that CCAO Legislative Counsel Kyle Petty was recently named as the new Managing Director of Policy for CCAO. Kyle is a tireless advocate for county government and I'm excited for him to continue CCAO's strong record of public policy successes in his new role.



We're also celebrating CORSA Managing Director, John Brownlee, who was recently elected to serve on the County Reinsurance Limited Board of Directors. This is a great honor, to be selected by one's peers from across the county, and it reflects his professionalism and expertise with county risk pools. CORSA also recently received special recognition from the Association of Government Risk Pools, reflecting their great work serving counties.

I'm excited to share that CEBCO will soon be serving 45 counties and their employees and families at the start of the new year. The CCAO Service Corporation continues to expand its participation in energy aggregation, and the CCAO website underwent a significant upgrade, led by CCAO Research Analyst Nick Ciolli and Communications Coordinator Jessica Newbacher. I could go on about the many exciting developments, but I'll keep it short and just say "thank you" to the many individuals involved in these efforts.

Looking forward, Election Day is nearly upon us. We wish the best of luck to all CCAO members on the ballot this fall. It takes a lot of effort and a good deal of courage to step up to run for public office. We are excited to welcome a new class of incoming CCAO members next year, and we thank outgoing CCAO members for their service to their counties and

their association.

Election Day also means that the lame duck session of the General Assembly is rapidly approaching. Lame duck sessions often feature a flurry of last-minute legislative activity. The CCAO policy team is working hard to achieve policy victories like Next Generation 9-1-1 and electronic pollbook funding while working to stop legislation that would harm counties. I cannot understate the importance of member engagement with General Assembly lawmakers during lame duck. When members speak united with one voice, we can achieve great things.

We look to bring that same united voice into 2023 as the state budget process begins once again. CCAO has outlined an ambitious agenda for the upcoming budget. We will need members to work in unison as the policy team seeks funding for indigent defense reimbursement, county jail construction and operations, a restoration of the Local Government Fund and more. Stay tuned about how you can help in these efforts!

Of course, the end of the year means the CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference is nearly upon us. We're organizing an exciting variety of sessions on topics critical to county government. The CCAO membership will also elect officers during the annual businesses meeting and ratify the association's policy platform. An exciting development for this year's winter conference is a new conference app that members can use to track all the conference activities. I look forward to seeing many CCAO members at the conference in just a few short weeks.

While the year is fast coming to a close, it's a pleasure to celebrate the many successes that have been achieved this year. With your continued support, we can build upon those efforts even further. Thanks to President Debbie Lieberman, the Executive Committee, the members of the CCAO Board of Directors, the chairs and membership of our standing policy committees, and our entire membership for the productive year. It truly is a pleasure to serve you and build stronger counties for a stronger Ohio.

## CCAO POLICY TEAM

### LAME DUCK SESSION PREVIEW: THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO FUND NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1

by Kyle Petty, CCAO Managing Director of Policy

First of all, it is a privilege to write my first article as a CCAO employee. The past six months have flown by for me as the new legislative counsel at CCAO and I would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who has taken the time to meet with me and share their county's viewpoint on a variety of issues that are pending before the Ohio General Assembly.



Petty

The post-election session or “lame duck” session as it is commonly called, creates a unique legislative environment. The House and Senate will meet for five session days and look to wrap up their work before Christmas. CCAO staff will be working as diligently as Santa’s elves to ensure that your priorities are enacted into law, while playing defense on pending legislation that is detrimental to counties.

One of our main priorities in lame duck is the enactment of House Bill 445 or “Next Gen 9-1-1.” This legislation will provide counties with sustainable funding to implement, connect, maintain, and operate the next generation 9-1-1 system.

The funding is derived from an increased user fee on devices that can access 9-1-1 from twenty-five cents to seventy cents. Over seventy percent of this funding will go directly to counties and at seventy cents, our fee will remain at or below all of our surrounding states.

A fee increase is necessary to replace antiquated 9-1-1 technology that relies on landlines with an upgraded internet-based platform that offers a multitude of service improvements for first responders and everyday Ohioans alike. The benefits include:

- Providing precise positioning of the 9-1-1 caller to increase accuracy and effectiveness of law enforcement and first responders when arriving at a scene.
- Providing first responders with key pieces of information before they arrive at the scene. This information can include medical information, pictures, and even a live video of the scene.
- Easier access than the current system, with the capability to text 9-1-1 and provide detailed information to dispatchers, thus increasing access for Ohioans with disabilities or potential victims of domestic violence.
- Information can be transferred across county lines and across multiple jurisdictions with ease.

Unfortunately, every community has experienced an instance where first responders were unable to save someone’s life after they called 9-1-1 for help. It is our belief that the next generation 9-1-1 system could have saved some of those lives, and more lives will be lost if Ohio does not upgrade its system.

That being said, lame duck presents the perfect opportunity to fund and implement this critical service. CCAO is working with numerous local government, trade, and first responder associations to make a unified push to get this bill enacted into law.

If you have a chance to speak with your local lawmakers, please mention the importance of this issue to them. This issue will not only continue the state-county partnership, but it will strengthen a key government service: public safety.

**GUEST COLUMN**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION’S IMPACT ON OVERALL HEALTH**

by Pat Bebo, Assistant Director, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension

The National State Boards of Education recently released a report entitled [“Investing in Early Child Workforce Recovery.”](#) It noted the impacts of the pandemic on the vulnerable early childhood education (ECE) workforce, with the loss of 40% of child care providers nationwide.

The ECE workforce has a critical role in supporting children, families, businesses, and communities as a whole. The recent CCAO Symposium on Workforce, Families and Children clearly outlined the loss experienced in the last two years in this area, as well as its impact on Ohio children, families, businesses, and communities. Groundwork Ohio recently released its new [Early Childhood Dashboard preview](#), which notes that “laying a strong foundation for every child is necessary for a healthier, more productive and economically vibrant Ohio.” These same findings were evident in the presentations at the CCAO Symposium.

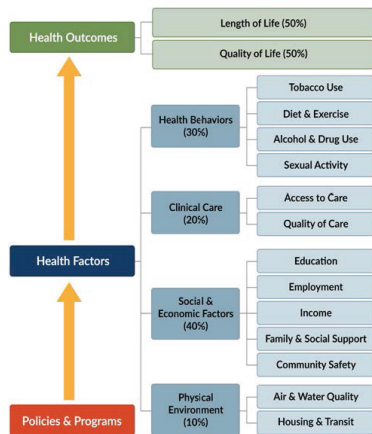
Early childhood education is a critical contributor to the broad definition of health that impact health outcomes overall. However, ECE is only one of a number of measures that affect health. The most recently released [County Health Rankings](#) from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation note several factors that impact health, including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment.

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation report, Ohioans fair worse in overall health outcomes as compared to national data. Additionally, Ohioans have higher smoking rates, obesity rates, physical inactivity, and poorer food environments when compared nationally as well as a higher level of children living in poverty. Combined, these factors hinder the ability of Ohioans to thrive and enjoy a healthy and productive life, which in turn hinders the health of families, neighborhoods, schools, and communities.

The vision of [Ohio State University Extension’s Family and Consumer Sciences program](#) is for all Ohioans to have the informational tools and resources to actively engage in creating conditions in which they thrive as individuals, and as part of families and communities. Our statewide staff work closely with local partners to translate the science of human development, consumer sciences, and health sciences into engaging, understandable, and impactful program offerings that allows the vision to become reality.

Through health and wellness programming that touches on chronic disease prevention with programs such as Dining with Diabetes, nutrition education, daily living skills education, parenting (Peacefully Parenting, Successful Co-Parenting, intergenerational parenting), mental wellness (Mental Health First Aid, Mindful Wellness), aging (Matter of Balance, Tai Chi) and financial health and wellness (Real Money Real World, Smart Money, Money 101 and Housing Counseling) we endeavor to provide tools to allow Ohioans to create more stability in their lives. Through workforce development education that includes ServSafe and Early Childhood Education continuing education programming, we are assisting Ohioans in gaining skills to continue to grow in their positions and be economically stable while at the same time provide critical services to their communities.

Our work is just part of the greater work of OSU Extension which provides practical advice, sensible solutions, and realistic down-to-earth answers for ALL Ohioans. No matter which county you live in or visit, you can find people who are helped by not only OSU Extension’s family and consumer sciences but also 4-H youth development, community development, and agriculture and natural resources. These program areas – and many other special topics – are continuously being evaluated and updated to meet the changing needs and issues facing each community.



## FEATURE

### COUNTY FLAGS DISPLAYED AT JAMES A. RHODES STATE OFFICE TOWER IN DOWNTOWN COLUMBUS

by Jessica Newbacher, CCAO Communications Coordinator

In late summer 2022, the James A. Rhodes State Office Tower in downtown Columbus displayed all 88 Ohio county flags provided by CCAO. The Rhodes Tower is home to many state agencies and their employees. Each flag was accompanied by an informational plaque about the county and its flag's history, provided by the communications team at the Ohio Department of Administrative Services.

County flags have been adopted intermittently over the years, with Brown County's flag as one of the oldest, originally adopted in 1953, and Fairfield County's as one of the newest, adopted in 2017. Adoptions were particularly frequent in two periods: the late 1980s, when counties were informed that those without a formal flag design would be designated at the statehouse grounds with a blank flag, and in the early 2000s when, in the lead-up to Ohio's bicentennial, the state passed a law requiring counties to formally adopt both a county flag and a county seal.

The colorful, educational display was another symbol of the state-county partnership and provided a unique opportunity for the community to learn more about the history and meaning behind the flags and the counties they represent.



Ohio County Flag Display in Rhodes Tower Lobby featuring map breaking down the 88 Ohio counties



Pictured: (from left to right) Gallia, Geauga, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Harrison, and Henry County flags



Pictured: (from left to right) Adams, Allen, Ashtabula, Ashland, Athens, Auglaize and Belmont County flags





Pictured: (from left to right) Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Madison, Mahoning, Marion, Medina, Meigs and Mercer County flags



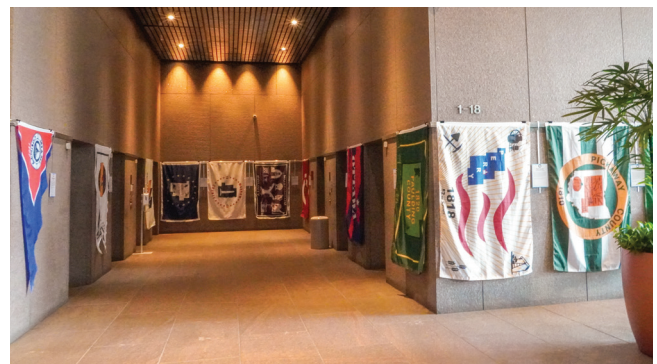
Pictured: (from left to right) Portage, Preble and Putnam County flags



Pictured: (from left to right) Holmes, Huron, Jackson, Jefferson, Knox, Lake, Lawrence, Licking and Logan County flags



Pictured: (from left to right) Portage, Preble and Putnam County flags



Pictured: (from left to right) Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Morrow, Muskingum, Noble, Ottawa, Paulding, Perry and Pickaway

## FEATURE

# WHERE ARE THE WORKERS? A COMMUNITY REPORT

by Christine Marshall, Executive Director, Summit/Medina Workforce Area Council of Governments

### Summary

One year ago, as ConxusNEO Board members discussed the disconnect between employers and workers, which became evident as the world reopened post the COVID-19 pandemic, we started asking “where are the workers?”.

Using several funding channels, we sought to uncover answers through a research project that asked working age adults how they were doing. The research spanned the Greater Akron Chamber footprint which consists of Medina, Portage, and Summit Counties.

The project commenced with a set of surveys to obtain insights from employers about their challenges in hiring talent and to determine the average working adult’s commitment to work. The next phase of the project invited response from workers. Spoiler alert: the research showed the direct impact from the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything about work as we know it.

We knew it would be important to understand where employers and workers were coming from to find solutions to fill job openings, retain workers, and address the skills gap. The impact of this research extends beyond our own organizations and into the region’s economic, education, and workforce development systems.

### Methodology

The employer research began in the late Fall of 2021, funded by ConxusNEO and TeamNEO with a distribution of surveys to employers across the three counties and follow-up focus groups for a deeper dive into the survey responses. With 254 surveys received, TeamNEO expanded the research and recovered an additional 512 employer responses across an 11-county footprint.

The 766 surveys revealed 80% of employers were facing a talent shortage, 65% experiencing higher turnover, 95% did not have a sufficient pool of qualified candidates, 18-30 years old were the

hardest to recruit and retain, and finding workers interested in full-time positions were the hardest to locate.

Finally, employers reported that raising wages and providing bonuses aren’t enough of an incentive. Workers are looking for more emphasis on company culture and creation of flexible policies which include hybrid work. Employers continue to struggle to find motivated employees.

The second portion of the research began with a survey for the working age adults made possible by U.S. Department of Labor funds through a grant to the Summit/Medina Workforce Area Council of Governments from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

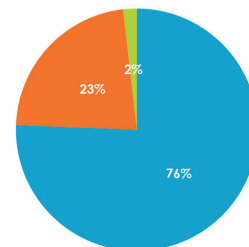
The survey’s content was collected from various community partners across the three counties. The research firm, Center for Marketing and Opinion Research, LLC (CMOR) was selected to develop the final tool, transmit the surveys, collect the data, conduct focus groups, and produce reports based upon the findings.

A total of 2,400 surveys (800 from each county) were collected between mid-February and the end of the first week in May of 2022. The Where Are the Workers (WATW) research project was expanded by the Fund for Our Economic Future (FFEF), who consulted with CMOR to replicate the tool to gather more information across eight additional northeast

## Final Results— Importance of salary info in job posting



QUESTION: When looking for a new job, how important is it that the salary information is included in the job posting or description?



Very important  
Somewhat important  
Not at all important



Ohio counties: Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Stark, Trumbull and Wayne resulting in an additional 2,587 survey responses.

## Results

Of those who are employed and/or looking for work, the findings showed:

- 98% say a wage is somewhat or very important;
- 92% say meaningful work is somewhat or very important;
- 91% say flexibility in the workplace is somewhat or very important;
- 55% are looking for part-time work; and
- 24% desire more training.

Additionally, we learned most respondents quitting their jobs did not have a new job lined up and many planned to quit in the next year. The number one reason expressed for quitting was a “toxic” work environment. Forty-three percent of the respondents declared work is less of a priority after the pandemic.

Eighteen to thirty year-olds were the number one age group involved in the “Gig” economy with 69% starting this type of work during the pandemic and 84% of respondents in that age group enjoyed the freedom of working for themselves. Both Gen Z and unemployed respondents expressed a desire for employers to provide access to mental health benefits.

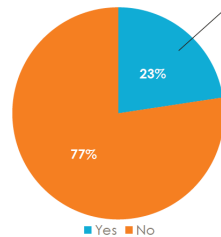
Themes emerged from the responses include:

- Wage matters
- “Flexibility” is desired

- Want “meaningful work” - feel a part of something/contributing
- Gig work is a large part of the current employment landscape
- Access to mental health services
- Half job seekers looking for part-time work
- High interest in job related training and education
- COVID has had a significant impact on defining what work means

## Final Results- Why left job

QUESTION: Have you quit or left a job in the past 12 months?



QUESTION: What is the main reason you left your last job?

Reason	#	%
Toxic work environment	43	12.3%
Schedule conflicts	40	11.4%
In transition	38	10.9%
Low pay	36	10.3%
Work overload	28	8.0%
Health	24	6.9%
Did not like job	19	5.4%
Impact of Covid	19	5.4%
Retirement	17	4.9%
Personal obligations	15	4.3%
Mental health	13	3.7%
Other	50	14.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>N=350</b>



The responses were analyzed during May 2022. The findings determined what topics would drive the five focus groups. The data has been sliced into various demographic categories including but, not limited to gender, race, age, household income, educational attainment, generation, geographic (major cities and by county), and employment status.

## Call to action

It is our desire to share our research findings with employers and workers to foster equitable, community-based solutions to this massive shift in the way our workplaces and economy perform. The next phase of the research project has shifted to collecting and sharing solutions.

We invite you to visit [www.conxusneo.jobs/watw](http://www.conxusneo.jobs/watw) for a slide presentation specific to the three-county research project. Finally, FFEF is leading our post-survey work for the region and will soon release a virtual tool kit for employers and an interactive website. For more information visit the FFEF website at [www.thefundneo.org/watw](http://www.thefundneo.org/watw).

## FEATURE

### FROM POINT A TO POINT B: WHAT'S DRIVING COMMISSIONER DAVIS

by Adam Schwiebert, CCAO External Affairs Manager



Commissioner Steve Davis

It's often said that county commissioners wear many hats. Budget manager, economic developer, solid waste and sanitation expert, human services leader, etc. – the list is seemingly endless. But for at least one commissioner, one additional, unique hat is thrown into the mix: Uber driver.

Spend some time in Fairfield County, and there's a decent chance your next Uber ride to the grocery store, restaurant or airport will come from Fairfield County Commissioner Steve Davis.

Since August, Davis has provided more than 150 Uber rides to individuals in Fairfield County. Why does he do it? It's not for the money. Instead, Davis's Uber driving was sparked by genuine curiosity. "I had been curious about Uber and the economic relationship between the platform, electric cars and solar power," said Davis.

Not satisfied with the existing research on the topic, Davis sought out his own data and got behind the wheel of his all-electric Chevy Bolt, powered mostly by electricity generated from his home's rooftop solar panels. Davis drives most days of the week, often spending several hours out on the road after his county commissioner duties have ended.

There isn't a lot of competition from other Uber drivers in the Lancaster area. Davis is one of just a

handful of drivers in Fairfield County. But the limited supply does nothing to decrease the demand for transportation services, Davis has discovered.

"I thought I knew a little bit about Uber from my own experiences as a consumer in different places, states and countries," said Davis. "And then I was blown away by seeing how Uber is used in a place like Fairfield County, where people use it for everyday needs."

Oftentimes, Davis drops off his riders at local fast-food restaurants or other businesses at the start of their shift. Sometimes, it's for a ride to the grocery store for a single mom with her kids, or the pharmacy when the walk is too far for someone with an illness.

Other times, it's a lift to the community transition center for individuals working to reintegrate back into society. With high used-car prices and few other alternatives, Uber is the best, albeit limited, transit option available to some county residents.

Of course, there are the unique passengers as well, such as the time Davis drove several members of the Portuguese Olympic track and field team to a local wedding. "They didn't know you typically can't get an Uber around here, but I happened to have the app open," said Davis. "Portugal would have been pretty ticked if I messed that one up."

Increasingly, Davis's Uber experiences are shaping his views on the public transportation needs of Fairfield County. The growing demand for transportation service places significant strain on existing public transit models.

Increased transit demand in Fairfield County means that every month, 500 individuals who seek transit service are unable to be served by the local transit authority. With few viable alternatives, residents turn to Uber, and thus, Davis.

"Paying \$15 to \$20 for an Uber to get to a modest

paying job... it looks like a bad choice on the surface, but in comparison to what other alternative?" Davis asks pointedly.

It's exploring the alternatives that is driving Davis these days. Recently, he's had conversations with the Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit System and other local and state officials about expanding on-demand service delivery options and increasing the number of rides provided.

Davis sees 2023 as a year of transition, where existing transit service is expanded while allowing for further study and exploration of longer-term, more robust solutions that reflect modern transit needs. It's a complex challenge that won't be solved overnight, but the status quo isn't working for enough county residents.

While Davis has seen the challenges of transit more directly than most, he's certainly not the only CCAO member who makes expanded transportation options a priority. Counties large and small across the state have continued to discuss the growing need to better connect individuals to employment opportunities, health care services, educational resources and more.

So, what's next for Davis? That's not an easy question to answer. After several months of driving under his belt, he's collected all the data he needs to satisfy his initial research question. In that sense, his work is done. But in another, perhaps deeper sense, his call to keep driving is stronger than ever.

"I've entered the phase where I don't want to turn the app off, because somebody out there needs a ride," says Davis.

For the time being, Davis will keep at it behind the wheel. He might stop driving one day, but not today. The need is too great and he's playing an important part in directly improving the lives of the citizens he serves.

CCAO members can follow along with Davis's Uber experiences by following his Facebook page, where he posts updates on his Uber trips and shares stories of his more memorable passengers.

## GUEST COLUMN

# WELCOME TO OCERP: DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN REBRAND

by Brian Christina, Senior Communications Strategist, Government Markets, Empower



The deferred compensation plan is pleased to announce an exciting brand refresh and name change. The County Commissioners Association of Ohio Deferred Compensation Plan is now the Ohio County Employees Retirement Plan (OCERP)! The new plan name is meant to more clearly emphasize who is eligible to participate, all county employees! This is a benefit available throughout county government and is an opportunity for employees to prepare and save for the future they imagine in their retirement.

The new look and plan name was communicated to all participants at the end of August where they were informed that over the coming weeks and months, they would begin to see the refreshed logo and slogan, "For the future you imagine", featured on all previously branded CCAO Deferred Compensation Plan resources and materials.

Assistant Director John Leutz lauded the transition as a milestone moment and significant benefit for employees going forward.

"This name change and transition is a momentous occasion for all those involved in the Ohio County Employees Retirement Plan," Leutz said. "One of the main differentiators of the OCERP plan is that when you talk with our folks you can get actual investment advice. The benefit of OCERP compared to others is you get advice you can take to the bank! Please join us in ushering in a new era for the plan as we continue to help our participants on their path to retirement readiness."

## FEATURE

### NOBLE COUNTY STUDENTS GAIN REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE THROUGH DRONE PROGRAM PILOT

by Jessica Newbacher, CCAO Communications Coordinator

This summer, two high school students were busy learning and perfecting a new skill: flying drones commercially. To make the Drone Program Pilot possible, Noble County Commissioners, Noble Local Schools and Noble County Job & Family Services partnered with AEP Energy.

The program began to take shape in Spring 2022, when Noble Local Schools first offered a preparatory course for students interested in becoming certified to fly drones commercially.

Two Noble County students: Sheldon Bates and Matthew Butcher, passed their initial aeronautical knowledge exams and were awarded the FAA 107 certificate from The Federal Aviation Administration. They were subsequently hired for the summer by the Noble County Engineer's office to collect drone footage.



Noble County Commissioner Brad Peoples, Noble Local STEM Teacher Jessie Howald, NCJFS Manager Misty Wells, Student Sheldon Bates, Student Matt Butcher, NCJFS Director Mindy Lowe, AEP Energy Delivery Manager Randy Lowe & Noble County Engineer Todd Coss

The program was funded by Noble County Job & Family Services, and it was managed by their Workforce Development Supervisor, Misty Wells. Randy Lowe, Energy Delivery Manager at AEP, brought knowledge from his experience with AEP's own drone program. He worked with NCJFS to identify necessary equipment, and with the Noble



Noble Local Schools Student Matthew Butcher

County Engineer's Office to develop the program. The students completed around 150-160 missions this summer, with an emphasis on getting necessary photos of bridges and water towers. The county needed to update its bridge asset records for 150 bridges.

The bridge photos captured by the drones can also be used to leverage grant applications for new bridges. Without drones, workers would need to physically climb these structures in order to capture photos, which is inefficient and sometimes dangerous.

The students learned that the experience includes much more than just flying the drone. The process entails filling out a pre-flight checklist, acquiring GPS coordinates, taking detailed notes during the flight, and post-production editing using Telemetry software.

"The good thing about the technology is that it is so user-friendly. It makes our jobs easier in the long run, and everything more efficient here at the Engineer's office," said student Matthew Butcher. The FAA 107 Certificate requires that in order to commercially fly a drone, pilots must be at least 16 years old. Although Sheldon passed his test and earned his certification, he isn't 16 yet, so he has to wait for his next birthday

to legally be able fly drones. Sheldon explained that this should not be a deterrent for younger students interested in becoming certified. Even without the official license, he was still able to work hands-on before, during and after all the drone flights.

They used drones from DJI, which the students thought were intuitive and had several helpful features for those new to drones. “There is geofencing, which blocks the drone from going above 400 AGL (above ground level), unless you get special permission,” said Butcher.

The drones will stop the user from flying in restricted air spaces and other limited access areas, such as prisons, helping beginners avoid any potential safety or legal issues with flying.

While the students were quick learners, the experience had its share of challenges. “We’ve had a few issues that we’ve been able to work out. Navigation was a big issue at the beginning of the summer,” explained student Sheldon Bates. Using GPS service in the more remote areas of the county proved to be difficult at times due to lack of cell phone signal, but after some practice they were able to adapt and find solutions.

Beyond the Engineer’s office, there are many other applications for drones. Noble Local Schools’ drone course has evolved to be agriculture-based, as the school recently built a farm.



Noble County flower arrangement outside Noble County Engineer’s Office (taken by drone camera)



Pictured (from left to right) CCAO Communications Coordinator Jessica Newbacher, Student Sheldon Bates, Student Matthew Butcher, NCJFS Manager Misty Wells (taken by drone camera)

Noble County Commissioners Ty Moore, Gary Saling & Brad Peoples recognized several use cases related to business, travel and tourism where drone footage can be utilized. All counties will see value in this application of drones; overhead shots of cities and landscapes show stunning views that only a drone camera can provide.

The students acknowledged that although presently there are not many jobs in which drone operating is the main duty, the future of drone operation is boundless and bright.

On top of business, tourism and agricultural uses, Randy Lowe mentioned the many applications of drones in the U.S. military as well as in a freelance capacity.

Noble County encourages other Ohio counties to start their own drone programs. In fact, Lowe has spent the past several months meeting with schools in counties all across Ohio to share the Noble Local Schools Drone curriculum, as well as the work completed over the summer by Bates and Butcher at the Noble County Engineer’s Office.

If you are interested in learning more about starting a pilot drone program in your county, reach out to your local Department of Job & Family Services. All 88 counties JFS Departments have been made aware of the program and will be able to point anyone interested in the right direction.

## VOICE OF COUNTY LEADERSHIP

### DONNIE WILLIS, JACKSON COUNTY COMMISSIONER



Jackson County Commissioner Donnie Willis

#### How long have you been a county commissioner?

I took office in January 2021, so I've been a commissioner just a little under two years.

#### Can you tell us about yourself?

I am 39 years old, married to my wife Nicole and have two girls Kynneddy 12 and Kyndall 7.

#### What is your professional background?

I have worked in both Corrections Administration Operational Management areas. Before becoming a commissioner, I was Director Of Operations at the Jackson County Prosecutors Office.

#### What other elected positions have you held?

This is my first time holding an elected position.

#### Why did you first run?

I felt there was an increasing need for new, energetic leadership in our county.

#### Why did you want to be a commissioner?

I believed my overall operations knowledge of the county would be a valuable asset to the commission.

#### What are you most proud of for having achieved in your time as commissioner?

On day one, we began streamlining county procedures. Taking advantage of modern technology allowed our office to be more efficient and we cut wasteful spending.

When I became commissioner I inherited a lot of aging and failing infrastructure, including "Leaky Roofs." Just a year and a half into my first term, we have made amazing gains and are now leak free!

#### What has been the biggest challenge you've dealt with as a county commissioner?

The influx of federal money during and after the pandemic has been my biggest challenge. Being a rural county we have very little staff so we are the grant writer, project manager and Commissioner all in one. CCAO was a major asset to rural counties overcoming this hurdle.

#### What was the biggest surprise or adjustment after taking office?

How much I loved the job; I enjoy the multi-faceted fast pace that comes with being a commissioner. Our days are never boring!



Pictured: (from left to right) Commissioners Bryan Davis, Chris Chmiel, Lenny Eliason and Donnie Willis





Pictured: (from left to right) CCAO Executive Director Cheryl Subler, Commissioner Chris Chmiel, Commissioner Donnie Willis, Commissioner Melanie Flax-Wilt, Commissioner and CCAO President Debbie Lieberman, and Commissioner Chris Abbuhl

**One of the primary responsibilities of a commissioner is to develop a balanced budget and provide adequate resources to deliver county services. What has been one of the biggest challenges in that area?**

One of the biggest challenges in this area is knowing we need to invest more in certain services within our county without the ability to do so.

**How have you or what has your county been doing to participate in the state-county partnership?**

We are constantly in conversation with our state leaders putting our best efforts into establishing solid working relationships.

**Could you discuss your involvement with CCAO as well as the benefits of being an active member?**

I am currently serving on the Board of Directors as well as three committee appointments. CCAO is an invaluable tool especially for new commissioners.

The amount of information flowing through to commissioners would be impossible for us to stay ahead of. CCAO does an amazing job of taking that information and disseminating it in a tactful way. The staff at CCAO are truly amazing; they are the main benefit of being active.

**What are your main priorities or personal causes? What is it about those particular issues that matter so much?**

My main priority as I move forward is working with CCAO and state officials on a list of topics that center around public safety and criminal justice. The current state of our system is flawed at best, and I hope serious action can be taken by the state to fix the current imbalance in our system.

**What do you find are the most successful methods for reaching out to the residents of your county to communicate what your office is doing and why your office is doing it?**

Direct engagement, seeing people out and about and striking up conversation will always be the best way to communicate with your constituents. In a pinch, social media works as a faster alternative.



Pictured: Governor Mike DeWine and First Lady Fran DeWine, Director John Carey of the Governor's Office of Appalachia, Commissioners Jon Hensler, Paul Haller and Donnie Willis with other officials

**“I enjoy the multi-faceted fast pace that comes with being a commissioner. Our days are never boring!”**

**-Commissioner Donnie Willis**

## FEATURE

# CCAO HOLDS WORKFORCE, FAMILIES, AND CHILDREN SYMPOSIUM

by Rachel Massoud Reedy, CCAO Member Engagement & Outreach Manager

In August, county commissioners, council members, and county staff gathered for the Workforce, Families, and Children Symposium at the Cherry Valley Hotel in Licking County to learn about and discuss critical human services issues. The full agenda, including expert speakers and their presentations from the event can be found [here](#), and some themes of the sessions are highlighted below.

Workforce is top of mind for CCAO members across the state, as well as the business communities in their counties. Employers, including counties as employers, are pivoting strategies in retaining workers and their recruitment efforts. Both employers and workforce development entities are actively training the workforce for the in-demand jobs throughout Ohio. Sessions at the symposium focused on data behind the workforce trends with respect to hiring and retention, best practices and strategies for recruiting, training, and workforce supports such as child care.



Emily Smith

Presentations from business development and private sector innovators such as JP Nauseef, President and CEO of JobsOhio, and Emily Smith, Director of Global Public Affairs and Sustainability at Intel, included information about what employers look for when attracting and retaining talent in this competitive environment. They were joined by Angela Carnahan, Workforce Development Administrator, Licking County Job & Family Services, and Swen Hunt, HR Manager, THK Manufacturing

of America, Inc., who discussed building solid relationships between the OhioMeansJobs Center and local businesses. When these relationships between the private and public sectors are strong, there is an increased ability to find qualified, trained workers to fill positions.

Joe Patton, Executive Director, OhioMeansJobs Allen County/ Job and Family Services discussed their relationship with employers and



Lisa Babb

the services they provide, including social media outreach and creating videos that show the work environment or “a day in the life” of an employee. Allen County has used these strategies for county positions and positions in businesses throughout the county. Kellijo Jeffries and Mandi Minnick with OhioMeansJobs Portage County/Job and Family Services highlighted their manufacturing internship program that connects job ready program participants with interest in manufacturing to specialized training and hands-on experience while providing opportunities for permanent, full-time employment.



JP Nauseef



Joe Patton

In a panel moderated by Warren County Commissioner Shannon Jones; Steve Stivers, Ohio Chamber of Commerce President & CEO; Lisa Patt-McDaniel, CEO, Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio; and Lisa Babb, Strategic Director, Quality Programs, 4C for Children; discussed the child care landscape across Ohio. As many employers struggle to find workers, the data shows lack of access to child care is a factor in parents not participating in the workforce. The panel discussion highlighted the need to expand eligibility and increase capacity of daytime childcare as well as second and third shift care to accommodate diverse work schedules.



Mandi Minnick

John Trott, Executive Director, Greater Ohio Workforce Board and Christine Marshall, Executive Director, Summit & Medina Workforce Area Council of Governments, presented the Working Age Adult Survey of Summit, Medina and Portage Counties. Details about this study are featured in “Where Are the Workers? A Community Report” that can be found on pages 10-11 of County Leader.

Another issue facing counties across the state



John Trott

is difficulty finding placements for children in custody and the high cost of such placement. Mary Wachtel, Director of Public Policy for Public Children Services Association of Ohio, detailed the ongoing challenges counties face in locating and funding the placement of children with severe behavioral health needs. These challenges are exacerbated by

difficulties in children service personnel retention, brought on by high stress environments and navigating numerous regulatory requirements.



Christine Marshall

Other themes covered throughout the sessions include: strategies for housing, food insecurity, mitigating the benefits cliff, independence and dignity for older adults, early intervention services, adverse childhood experiences, mental health strategies for incarcerated populations, and the OneOhio opioid settlement.

This symposium would not have been possible without leadership from the Planning Committee including: Debbie Lieberman, CCAO President and Montgomery County Commissioner; Chris Abbuhl, CCAO 2nd Vice President and Tuscarawas County Commissioner; Tim Bubb, CCAO Executive Committee Member and Licking County Commissioner; Julie Ehemann, CCAO Executive Committee Member and Shelby County Commissioner; Shannon Jones, Warren County Commissioner; David Kern, Defiance County Commissioner; Kerry Metzger, Tuscarawas County Commissioner; Carolyn Rice, CCAO Human Services Committee Vice Chair and Montgomery County Commissioner; Christiane Schmenk, Union County Commissioner; and Kathryn Whittington, CCAO Human Services Committee Chair and Ashtabula County Commissioner. Thank you to CCAO President Debbie Lieberman and Cheryl Subler, CCAO Executive Director, for their vision and desire to create an event where CCAO members can connect and learn.

Additionally, a huge thank you goes to Robin Garrett, CCAO Boards' Liaison and Events Manager, for organizing the event and ensuring everything ran smoothly.

## CEBCO NEWS

### AN UPDATE FROM CEBCO

by Mike Kindell, Managing Director of Health and Wellness

Coshocton County will join CEBCO starting January 1, 2023. It will be the 45th member of CEBCO, bringing total membership to more than half of all Ohio counties. Two other counties also announced they will be joining CEBCO in the new year: Hancock and Pickaway counties.



Kindell

With the addition of Coshocton, Hancock and Pickaway Counties in 2023, CEBCO will provide Medical and Prescription coverage to over 13,550 employees and nearly 30,500 members.

CEBCO continues its mission to provide Ohio counties with stable and competitive rates, financial strength, and broad coverage that includes an array of health management, wellness, and lifestyle management services.

CEBCO hosted the 2023 Renewal Meeting in early September, virtually for the first time. The final average renewal increase was 6.7% after the use of member equity and all of the member counties have renewed their coverage for the coming year.

The range of renewal increases was -2.5% to 13%. Though the renewal increase was higher than normal, it is still below the anticipated medical trend for 2023. Overall, medical claims for the renewal period were up by 15.1% and pharmacy claims were up by 2.3%.

These increases were mitigated by our new three-year agreement with Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield which included an increase in guaranteed Rx rebates for 2023 and subsequent years. In addition, our members and the CEBCO counties have saved nearly \$2.5M with the implementation of the Cost Relief Optimization program which leverages drug manufacturer's programs that lower or eliminate member cost share for high-cost medications.

One change that the Board of Directors approved was to raise each County's individual stop loss by \$25,000 for the coming year to reflect the continued increase in large dollar claims that the pool covers. As the second step in this process, the Board also approved a change in the CEBCO Stop Loss Carrier and increased the pool's stop loss point to \$800,000. Based on our previous experience, this should provide savings in the next year.

Beginning 1/1/23, a new program being added to the CEBCO portfolio is Anthem's Virtual Primary Care (VPC), which will allow CEBCO members the opportunity to speak virtually with a Primary Care Physician (PCP). This program is available to members between the ages of 18 – 64 and provides extended hours during the week with appointment availability on the weekend. Currently, 16.2% of CEBCO members are not attributed to a PCP and this will allow them access for preventive wellness visits, along with urgent and chronic care needs.

Hannah McKee and Laurie O'Brien, our Wellness Coordinators, welcomed County Wellness Champions to the CCAO offices for our annual Wellness Meeting. Topics covered during the meeting included 2022/23 program updates and enhancements, SmartShopper (a program that pays a cash incentive for using high-quality, low-cost providers), grant updates, and ideas to increase county participation.

One additional feature was a networking lunch where counties met with each other to share ideas and ask questions. A wellness walk was included in the program. This is always a successful event and we would like to thank Health Works, our wellness vendor; Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield; SmartShopper; and our Wellness Champions for attending and sharing best practices.



**CORSA NEWS**

**SECOND MILO SYSTEM DUE TO POPULAR DEMAND**

by Frank Hatfield, CORSA Risk Manager



Pictured: (left to right) Tom Meek, MILO Trainer and CORSA Risk Control Law Enforcement Consultant Steve Flory at a MILO Training session

CORSA is committed to providing professional and innovative law enforcement trainings, services, and reimbursements as part of its overall member risk management

program. CORSA Sheriff’s Offices, law enforcement agencies and facilities have access to numerous industry leading services and resources at no cost. A few general examples of CORSA law enforcement and corrections risk management offerings include:

- Best practice law enforcement policies
- In-person, webinar, and online law enforcement and corrections training
- Onsite law enforcement loss control visits and jail reviews
- Onsite one-on-one decision-based de-escalation deputy and corrections officer training

CORSA purchased a Multiple Interactive Learning Objective (MILO) system six years ago. The MILO system is used to conduct onsite de-escalation training. MILO training requires participants to react and respond to various simulations (e.g. traffic stop; belligerent inmate) to determine if the use of force is necessary to reach a resolution and, if so, decide what level of force is appropriate given the circumstances.

After completing each simulation, a debriefing session is conducted with the participant regarding the action taken. While deputies and corrections officers must be prepared to use force in dynamic fluid situations, instructors stress that many times situations can be safely resolved with verbal



commands and communication. Over the past six years CORSA de-escalation training and CORSA

members have received favorable press coverage including stories in the Medina Gazette and Marion Star. More importantly, CORSA member Sheriff’s Offices have taken advantage of this no-cost training so much so that CORSA is pleased to announce that it purchased a second MILO system to keep up with demand.

CORSA also retained the services of Tom Meek to provide additional on-site, one-on-one simulated de-escalation training. Tom has over 30 years of law enforcement experience including SWAT, and he is a current auxiliary deputy with the Logan County Sheriff’s Office.

Should you have any questions regarding CORSA Law Enforcement and Corrections Risk Management Services please contact Steve Flory, Law Enforcement Loss Control Consultant; Ken Hilty Law Enforcement Loss Control, or Frank Hatfield, CORSA Loss Control Manager.



Steve Flory  
CORSA Risk Control Law Enforcement Consultant  
(614) 981-3414 (o)  
[sflory@ccao.org](mailto:sflory@ccao.org)



Ken Hilty  
CORSA Risk Control Law Enforcement Consultant  
(614) 357-6966 (o)  
[khilty@ccao.org](mailto:khilty@ccao.org)



Frank Hatfield  
Loss Control Manager  
(614) 560-1474 (o)  
[fhatfield@ccao.org](mailto:fhatfield@ccao.org)

## CCAO SERVICE CORP NEWS ENERGY UPDATE

by Mark Frye, President, Palmer Energy

Over the past decade, Ohio consumers have experienced very affordable energy rates. Like all good things, this has unfortunately come to an end. Many factors play into energy pricing with the most pertinent being weather, natural gas production, as well as domestic and global events. As demand for natural gas fired electric generation continues increasing, we are seeing year-round volatility in natural gas and electric rates.

US natural gas supply is adequate as reflected in energy pricing beyond the next year. However, additional volatility in the market has occurred due to market speculation, changing energy policies and weather demands. While gas production is strong, LNG exports are offsetting production gains that could be utilized in the US. Global events also continue to play a pivotal role in today's market as the war in Ukraine persists and Russia's recent threat to further reduce gas supply to other European countries.

The natural gas market has increased dramatically since April 2021 when gas was trading below \$3.00 per million Btu. June 2022 prices were the highest in a decade at over \$9.00. The current 12-month average price is trading at about \$6.75 with winter months above \$7.00.

Since earlier this year, the market prices have traded in wide ranges based on relatively small shifts in gas storage injections and updated weather forecasts. Downside potential from current prices is still in play if we have a warm winter but significant upside price risk for winter prices still exists.

Wholesale power markets have also experienced extreme volatility. The September 28th average settlement for Oct – Dec 2022 peak wholesale power was about 115% higher than the same date a year ago and about 175% higher compared to the three-year average. Yet over the past month the 2022 peak average pricing has declined roughly 28%.

The utility price to compare (PTC), or price paid if a



consumer obtains power supply directly from the electric utility, is expected to see a significant increase for the coming delivery year. If prices in recent auctions continue, the PTC may be 12¢ or 13¢ per kWh starting next June.

Other than adjusting their thermostats, most consumers have little ability to curtail usage regardless of the price of energy. So how does the CCAO Energy Program help? Our primary goal is to help counties manage their energy costs through the power of group buying and strategic energy procurement.

Our county facilities and government aggregation programs offer reliable energy savings and exemplary customer service to help all participants navigate the complex and ever-changing energy industry.

The CCAO Energy Committee meets regularly with Palmer Energy staff to discuss market conditions and the program's future approach in an ever-changing energy landscape. These uncertain times are also causing concern for many consumers; as a result, communities are receiving numerous calls from residents inquiring about joining an existing government aggregation program.

Palmer Energy's staff has personally spoken to hundreds of your constituents to explain their options and assist with enrollment for eligible residences. If you or a resident has questions about the program and its offerings, please contact your Palmer Energy representative.

COUNSELOR’S CORNER

HB 140 BRINGS CHANGES TO PROPERTY TAX LEVIES AND VOTED BOND ISSUES

by Sarah O’Dea and Rebecca Princehorn, Attorneys, Bricker & Eckler LLP

Beginning with the May 2, 2023 election, House Bill (HB) 140, also known as the “Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act,” will make sweeping changes to election procedures, affecting all new and renewal county property tax levies, including those issued for the purpose of DD, ADAMH and Children’s Services. HB 140’s most significant provisions modify the ballot language for various types of levies and voted bond issues. To illustrate how these changes will appear on the ballot, the following table shows the current ballot language for a new levy under Ohio Revised Code § 5705.25 compared to the revised ballot language required under HB 140.

Current Ballot Language	HB 140 Revised Ballot Language
An additional tax for the benefit of (name of subdivision or public library) _____ for the purpose of (the purpose stated in the resolution) _____ at a rate not exceeding _____ mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to (rate expressed in dollars and cents) _____ for each one hundred dollars in valuation, for _____ (number of years levy is to run, or that it will be levied for a continuous period of time).	An additional tax for the benefit of (name of subdivision or public library) _____ for the purpose of (the purpose stated in the resolution) _____ that the county auditor estimates will collect \$ _____ annually, at a rate not exceeding _____ mills for each one dollar <del>of valuation</del> <b>\$1 of valuation taxable value</b> , which amounts to (rate expressed in dollars and cents) \$ _____ for each <del>one hundred dollars in valuation</del> <b>\$100,000 of the county auditor’s appraised value</b> , for _____ (number of years levy is to run, or that it will be levied for a continuous period of time).

The sample ballot language shows three significant changes made by HB 140. The first is HB 140’s requirement that a county’s total estimated annual revenue from the levy be added to the ballot (excluding bond issues). Second, ballot language must now express the cost to the taxpayer per \$100,000 instead of per \$100. Third, the cost per \$100,000 must be based on true value, referred to as the “county auditor’s appraised value,” instead of on assessed / taxable value, which is 35% of the appraised value (for real property only).

Despite this change, the ballot millage for the levy will still need to be expressed in mills (one-tenth of a cent) for each \$1 of taxable value, which means that the revised ballot language will express levy amounts based on two different valuations (assessed / taxable value for the millage calculation and true/appraised value for the cost-per-\$100,000 calculation). For any proposed levy that is a renewal, decrease, increase or expansion of an existing tax, HB 140 adds an additional requirement to calculate the cost per \$100,000 based on the estimated effective tax rate for residential/agricultural (Class

1) properties (even though not all properties are residential/agricultural (Class 1) properties). Voters will need to be educated, not only about a proposed ballot initiative and its importance to their county, but also the difference between how property taxes are levied versus how they are paid. If an individual voter wishes to better understand the impact of a proposed levy on their specific property and circumstances, then the county auditor can calculate an estimate based on all relevant factors. However, it is important to note that certain differences among taxpayers, levies and properties mean the calculation of the actual taxes on an individual property derived from a levy can vary significantly. Those differences include: the type of property; the use of the property; reduction factors that apply to fixed-rate levies, meaning property owners often pay lower effective rates for such levies rather than the full voted rate; the primarily wealth-based homestead exemption and other discounts applicable to individual property taxpayers; and state subsidies (i.e. the 10% residential/agricultural and 2.50% owner-occupied rollbacks) that may apply to some levies and properties but not to others.

In addition, HB 140 will impact the form of election proceedings as they are submitted by counties to county auditors and board of elections prior to the election date. Election proceedings used by counties will require substantial revisions to comply with HB 140’s many new requirements. These requirements should also be included in the initial resolutions of boards for which the commissioners serve as taxing authority, not only DD, ADAMH and Children’s Services, but also county libraries and county library districts, etc. Recall, however, that under OAG No. 2009-030, if a county library levy is submitted pursuant to O. R.C. 5705.23, it is the library board that is required to seek valuation and millage certifications from the county auditor, not the county commissioners. Counties will need to be prepared to address these issues on two fronts – both internally, with efforts to bring their election proceedings in line with HB 140’s new requirements, and externally, by educating voters in a non-promotional way about the need for revenue and how the new ballot language may not be a good estimate of their actual tax liability.

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## CORSA LEADERSHIP

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Co-Chair: Pete Gerken, Lucas County Commissioner  
Co-Chair: Doug Spencer, Auglaize County Commissioner

## CCAO STAFF

**Brandy Allen**, Senior Accountant  
(614) 220-0640 | ballen@ccao.org

**Sherry Barbosky**, CORSA Underwriting Manager  
(614) 220-7995 | sbarbosky@ccao.org

**Nedra Benson**, CCAO Administrative Professional  
(614) 221-5627 | nbenson@ccao.org

**Melissa Bodey**, CEBCO Senior Benefit Specialist  
(614) 220-7997 | mbodey@ccao.org

**John Brownlee**, CORSA Managing Director  
(614) 220-7988 | jbrownlee@ccao.org

**Debi Burnette**, CEBCO Enrollment and Billing Specialist  
(614) 220-0644 | dburnette@ccao.org

**Thisbe Butcher**, Finance Manager  
(614) 220-7990 | tbutcher@ccao.org

**Nick Ciolli**, Research Analyst  
(614) 220-7983 | nciolli@ccao.org

**Tricia Callihan**, CORSA Program Assistant  
(614) 220-7993 | tcallihan@ccao.org

**Wendy Dillingham**, CEBCO Senior Benefit Specialist  
(614) 220-7992 | wdillingham@ccao.org

**Steve Flory**, CORSA Risk Control Consultant  
(614) 981-3414 | sflory@ccao.org

**Albert Francis**, CORSA Senior Claims Representative  
(614) 220-0638 | afrancis@ccao.org

**Robin Garrett**, Boards' Liaison & Events Manager  
(614) 220-0653 | rgarrett@ccao.org

**Justin Grant**, Benefit Specialist  
(614) 220-7984 | jgrant@ccao.org

**James Hale**, CORSA Risk Control Consultant  
(614) 246-1630 | jhale@ccao.org

**Frank Hatfield**, CORSA Risk Manager  
(614) 220-0639 | fhatfield@ccao.org

**Ken Hilty**, CORSA Law Enforcement Consultant  
(614) 357-6966 | khilty@ccao.org

**Jon Honeck**, Senior Policy Analyst  
(614) 220-7982 | jhoneck@ccao.org

**Tim Hoverman**, Operations Manager  
(614) 220-0655 | thoverman@ccao.org

**Amanda Jones**, CORSA Claims Representative  
(614) 220-0636 | ajones@ccao.org

**Mike Kindell**, Managing Director of Health and Wellness  
(614) 220-0645 | mkindell@ccao.org

**Jeff Knapp**, CORSA Claims Supervisor  
(614) 220-0642 | jknapp@ccao.org

**John Leutz**, Assistant Director  
(614) 220-7994 | jleutz@ccao.org

**Katie Lininger**, CORSA Senior Claims Representative  
(614) 220-0637 | klininger@ccao.org

**Hannah McKee**, Wellness Coordinator  
(614) 220-0654 | hmckee@ccao.org

**Elizabeth Miller**, CORSA Claim and Litigation Manager  
(614) 220-7989 | emiller@ccao.org

**Ryan Mills**, Accountant  
(614) 220-7985 | rmills@ccao.org

**Jessica Newbacher**, Communications Coordinator  
(614) 220-7986 | jnewbacher@ccao.org

**Laurie O'Brien**, CEBCO Wellness Coordinator  
(614-220-7977) | lobrien@ccao.org

**Kyle Petty**, Managing Director of Policy  
(614-220-7977) | kpetty@ccao.org

**Curtis Pratt**, CORSA Claims Representative  
(614) 220-0636 | cpratt@ccao.org

**Alison Redmond**, CORSA Membership Services Manager  
(614) 220-7991 | aredmond@ccao.org

**Rachel Massoud Reedy**, Member Outreach & Engagement Manager  
(614) 220-7996 | rreedy@ccao.org

**Adam Schwiebert**, External Affairs Manager  
(614) 220-7981 | aschwiebert@ccao.org

**Cheryl Subler**, Executive Director  
(614) 220-7980 | csubler@ccao.org

County Leader, CCAO's quarterly e-magazine, provides an in-depth look at the news, programs and policies affecting Ohio's 88 counties. The e-magazine also showcases our members, offers best county practices as well as ways to enhance the state-county partnership practices and shares the offerings of the association. If you have questions or story submissions, contact Editor Jessica Newbacher at [jnewbacher@ccao.org](mailto:jnewbacher@ccao.org) or 614-220-7986.