



# News Release

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## **CCAO applauds historic investment in Appalachian Ohio, primary election funding**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) commends and sincerely thanks the members of the Ohio General Assembly for their support of House Bill 377, which among other provisions, enacts Governor DeWine’s historic proposal for investing in Appalachian Ohio and provides funding to counties for the August 2<sup>nd</sup> primary election.

“Ohio’s Appalachian counties are deeply grateful for state lawmakers’ support and are excited about the possibilities these funds will unlock,” said Tuscarawas County Commissioner and CCAO Second Vice President Chris Abbuhl. “Counties look forward to putting these funds to work to strengthen our communities, improve community health, prepare our workforce for the jobs of tomorrow and much, much more. It is a strong partnership that will serve Ohio well.”

The bill invests \$500 million into Ohio’s 32 Appalachian counties. These funds can be used for a broad array of initiatives to strengthen Appalachian communities, including infrastructure, tourism development, education and workforce training, and community health.

The plan is supported on a bipartisan basis by all 96 county commissioners from Ohio’s 32 Appalachian counties. Counties look forward to partnering with the state and with their local communities to both plan and implement these critical investments.

CCAO also applauds the General Assembly for including within HB 377 funding to county boards of elections for the August 2<sup>nd</sup> primary.

“Election administration is a significant cost that is primarily borne by county government,” said CCAO President Debbie Lieberman. “With a unique election year featuring two primary elections, counties were placed in the difficult position of having to fund an additional unbudgeted primary. Counties deeply appreciate the General Assembly responding to counties’ request and making these funds available.”

HB 377 provides \$20 million to help offset these additional primary costs. These funds supplement the \$9.2 million previously appropriated by the General Assembly to assist with primary election expenses. CCAO thanks the General Assembly for partnering with counties to fund these additional primary expenses, brought on by events outside of counties’ control.

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