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**CCAO Applauds Governor DeWine’s Executive Budget Proposal**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) applauds Governor DeWine and his administration for strong support of county government in the executive biennial budget proposal. In his announcement, Governor DeWine highlighted investments in several county policy priorities, including Next Generation 9-1-1, child care, and housing supports.

“CCAO is deeply grateful for Governor DeWine’s continued support of county government,” CCAO President David Painter said. “This administration understands the challenges county governments face and has invested in the state-county partnership, including in this proposal. The governor’s budget plan will further enhance this partnership, providing valuable support to counties as they deliver vital programs and services to Ohioans”

CCAO’s top priorities for this budget cycle are bolstering Ohio’s child welfare system, reforming and fully funding the indigent defense system, supporting county jail construction and renovation, continuing the rollout of NG 9-1-1, and increasing access to child care.

Each of these priorities received significant attention in the Executive Budget. The budget funds additional jail construction and renovation projects by dedicating a portion of an increased adult-use marijuana excise tax to this vital public safety purpose, allocating an estimated $155 million over the biennium for county jails. The budget also includes the creation of a pilot program in Allen, Hardin, and Putnam counties for the state administration of indigent defense. This pilot program was recommended by two separate task forces on indigent defense reform and CCAO is glad to see its support by the Governor.

The Governor’s budget also completes the state’s buildout of the NG 9-1-1 system and continues support for the system’s operation. This system saves lives and keeps first responders safe as they respond to calls and must continue to receive robust support from the state.

The administration’s proposal continues the governor’s strong support for children and families through increased investment in our state child protection system and child care accessibility. These investments will assist counties with placement costs and crisis stabilization for youth, and provide more families with access to affordable and quality child care.

The Governor’s proposal also includes an increase in the Local Government Fund to 1.75%, the second budget in a row that the Governor has called for raising the funding share to local governments. This increase is expected to increase revenue sharing to local governments by $120 million over the biennium, providing much appreciated support for counties, which administer many state programs.

Governor DeWine’s administration has worked closely with CCAO to restore the state-county partnership during his tenure in office, and CCAO is thankful to the Governor for his continued support for county government. Today’s budget proposal marks another critical step in building a strong partnership for stronger counties and a stronger Ohio.

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