



STATEHOUSE REPORT

Published by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio

209 East State Street · Columbus OH 43215-4309 · Phone: 614-221-5627 · Fax: 614-221-6986 · www.ccao.org

April 17, 2026

Ohioans to Protect Public Services formally launches

Since last year, CCAO has been actively involved in building a statewide coalition focused on raising awareness of the essential services funded by property taxes and the impact that a loss of this revenue stream would have on the vital services that Ohioans depend on every day. Our message continues to emphasize property tax reform, not abolishment.

Yesterday, the coalition, Ohioans to Protect Public Services, released new educational materials for your review and use. You can access these resources at ProtectPublicServices.org.

The website offers a growing library of information highlighting the programs and services supported by local property tax dollars. These include [public safety](#), [services for the developmentally disabled](#), [infrastructure](#), and more. Additional materials will continue to be added over time.

Copies of these materials are also available on the [County Government Toolkit on CCAO's website](#).

Providing our members with resources to support their local outreach has been a key priority for CCAO. We are encouraged by the continued growth of this bipartisan coalition, which now includes the business community, first responders, local governments, labor organizations, senior services, schools, developmental disabilities advocates, veterans groups, and many others.

CCAO members may find these materials especially helpful when engaging with their communities about the importance of local property taxation.

Please note that, while these materials have been reviewed by legal counsel and were found appropriate for member use, we recommend consulting your county prosecutor or other legal counsel if you have any questions about sharing them through official channels.

If you have questions concerning Ohioans to Protect Public Services, please contact Managing Director of Enterprise and Retirement Services [Steve Caraway](#).

Counties encouraged to engage lawmakers on jail funding needs

As discussions continue around the next state capital appropriations bill, CCAO is continuing its efforts to advocate for meaningful state investment in county jail infrastructure.

CCAO, in partnership with the Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, is requesting that the General Assembly include \$75 million in the upcoming capital budget to support county jail construction, renovation, expansion, and security improvement projects. This funding would build on the state's previous investments, which have already helped a number of counties address critical facility needs, acquire property, and begin planning for modern, safe, and secure detention facilities.

Counties across Ohio continue to face growing challenges with aging infrastructure, increasing operational demands, and evolving safety standards for both staff and inmates. In many cases, existing facilities are outdated, overcrowded, or no longer designed to meet today's correctional and behavioral health needs. Strategic state investment can play a key role in helping counties move forward with projects that improve public safety and operational efficiency while reducing long-term costs.

To support this effort, CCAO is asking counties to share information about any upcoming or anticipated jail-related projects, including:

- New jail construction
- Renovations or expansions of existing facilities
- Security upgrades or critical infrastructure improvements

If your county is planning or considering a jail project, CCAO would welcome the opportunity to assist you with outreach to the DeWine Administration and members of the General Assembly. Outreach is critical right now to ensure that funds are included in the capital bill to support investments in county jail infrastructure. These outreach efforts may include helping to highlight your county's needs, coordinating messaging, and supporting requests for state funding.

[CCAO made an initial request to Governor DeWine in February.](#)

Counties interested in participating or learning more are encouraged to contact CCAO at policy@ccao.org. Your engagement will be critical in demonstrating the statewide need for continued investment in county jail infrastructure.

Scioto County Commissioner Powell testifies on recovery housing oversight bill

[House Bill 58](#) (Representatives Justin Pizzulli and Dontavius Jarrells) had its second hearing in the Senate Addiction and Community Revitalization Committee this week. The bill converts the Department of Behavioral Health's monitoring of recovery housing residences to a state certification program and requires DBH to maintain a comprehensive and consolidated lists of residences. Under the bill, ADAMH boards may participate in investigations.

The bill also establishes a process for seeking injunctions against violators that begins with local prosecuting attorneys. HB 58 would prevent kickbacks for referrals to recovery housing residences and establishes an Ohio Recovery Housing Task Force to study and make recommendations for recovery housing on various issues including an ombudsman program, periodic inspections, fraud in billing and distribution based on need.

[Scioto County Commissioner Scottie Powell testified in support](#) of HB 58 during the hearing. Commissioner Powell described Scioto County's experience with the opioid epidemic and subsequent increase in recovery providers in the county, and expressed support for the measures in HB 58 that allow for more monitoring and accountability of providers which still providing for the supports needed in the community.

Other proponents include the Scioto County Sheriffs' Office, Ohio Council of Behavioral Health Providers, Ohio Alliance of Recovery Providers, Ohio Recovery Housing, and the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board of Seneca, Ottawa, Sandusky, and Wyandot counties.

Legislative Activity

Committee Hearings

The following committees held hearings this week regarding bills that may interest counties.

Senate Armed Services, Veterans Affairs, and Public Safety

- [House Bill 297](#) (Representatives Kevin Ritter and Johnathan Newman): To increase the amount a county may provide to military and veterans organizations for Memorial Day expenses.
 - Third hearing, no testimony
- [House Bill 251](#) (Representative Bernard Willis): To establish requirements related to the use of an unmanned aerial vehicle by law enforcement and to expressly incorporate additional aviation facilities into the Aeronautics Law.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the Institute for Justice and a professor from Baldwin Wallace University
 - **AMENDED** to prohibit public entities from purchasing or acquiring any unmanned aerial vehicles from counties designated as a foreign adversary.

Senate Judiciary

- [House Bill 532](#) (Representative Kevin Miller): To require a public children services agency to take immediate custody of specified children who cannot be released to a parent, guardian, or custodian.

- First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance, and Technology

- [Senate Bill 239](#) (Senators Andrew Brenner and Al Cutrona): Regarding contributions to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Workforce Development

- [Senate Bill 331](#) (Senators Steve Wilson and Willis Blackshear): To allow certain public hospitality employees to accept gratuities.
 - Third hearing, interested party testimony from the Ohio Municipal League.
 - **AMENDED** to exclude a provision counting tips towards retirement contributions and to remove a provision regarding regularly compensation levels.

Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources

- [Senate Bill 181](#) (Senator Shane Wilkin): To establish regulations for the underground mining of limestone and dolomite.
 - Fifth hearing, no testimony
 - **AMENDED** to limit a prohibition on local zoning authorities regulating underground mineral mining to only apply to land that is already allowed to be used for that purpose, to remove increases in severance tax rates, and other changes.
 - **FAVORABLY REPORTED**

Introduction of Bills

The following bill(s) that may be of interest to counties were introduced this week:

- [House Bill 816](#) (Representatives Gary Click and Brian Lorenz): To exempt service dogs and miniature horses from sales and use tax.
- [House Bill 817](#) (Representative Josh Williams): To create the NextGen Public Safety Pilot Program, to authorize Local Government Fund reductions if Lucas County or the City of Toledo fail to abide by certain terms of a grant under that Program, and to make an appropriation.
- [House Bill 823](#) (Representatives David Thomas and Ty Mathews): To allow an elected official who is deployed on active military duty to retain the official's position and to attend meetings virtually.
- [House Bill 824](#) (Representative Sean Brennan): To allow an elected official who is deployed on active military duty to retain the official's position.
- [House Bill 827](#) (Representatives Desiree Tims and Crystal Lett): To revise the law governing income eligibility for publicly funded child care.

Upcoming Committee Hearings

No upcoming hearings scheduled.