

THE STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Ohio county leaders gather with local officials at White House to discuss impact of federal legislation



Pictured above: Local government leaders from across Ohio, including Hamilton County Commissioners Alicia Reece, Stephanie Summerow Dumas, and Denise Driehaus; Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman; and Franklin County Commissioners John O’Grady and Erica Crawley, attend the Building a Better Ohio summit at the White House on Wednesday.

On Wednesday this week, local leaders from across the state gathered at the White House as part of the Communities in Action: Building a Better Ohio program. The event brought local community leaders, including eight CCAO members, to discuss the impact of recently-enacted federal legislation on their communities.

Representing Ohio counties were Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman; Franklin County Commissioners John O’Grady, Kevin Boyce, and Erica Crawley; Hamilton County Commissioners Denise Driehaus, Alicia Reece and Stephanie Summerow Dumas; and Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Buddish.

Among the topics discussed during the roundtable event, the impact of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was a popular topic for participants. Franklin County Commissioner Erica Crawley shared how the Franklin County Rise program, made possible through ARPA, allows for 750 families to receive childcare support to aid those returning to the workforce.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was also a topic of discussion during Wednesday’s meeting. The legislation has invested \$2.8 billion already in Ohio, with funds going toward transportation funding, broadband, clean water and other critical infrastructure.

Additionally, the CHIPS and Science Act was discussed as a means of driving high-tech manufacturing back to Ohio. The CHIPS Act helped make possible Intel’s recent commitment to build two new microchip factories in Licking County. President Joe Biden later participated in a groundbreaking ceremony at the site with state, local and company officials on Friday.

Ohio receives AAA credit rating from Fitch

Ohio’s credit rating from Fitch rating agency increased this week, from AA+ to AAA. Fitch, which has been rating Ohio’s credit since the 1990s, had never previously given a AAA rating to Ohio. The AAA rating reflects the highest rating for Ohio since 1979, among the big three credit rating agencies.

In its analysis, Fitch cited the material strengthening of the state’s financial resilience and budget management in recent years. Sustained economic growth paired with growing fiscal reserves and cash balances have left the state in a stronger fiscal position. Fitch also cited the state’s increase in the rainy day fund percentage (8.5 percent of GRF vs 5 percent) as evidence of fiscal resilience.

“This historic move by Fitch to upgrade Ohio’s rating to ‘AAA’ comes as a result of our economic policies and fiscal stewardship that have brought measurable results,” said Gov. Mike DeWine in a statement. “Today’s news is additional validation that Ohio’s fiscal management is on solid footing and our economy is surging ahead.”

The elevated credit rating allows for lower borrowing costs for the state. Additional details on the state’s credit rating can be found on the [Fitch website](#).

State revenues beat estimates by \$82 million in August

The Ohio Office of Budget and Management released the preliminary revenue figures for August 2022 this week, showing that collections once again exceeded estimates.

For the month, the state collected \$82.7 million (3.4%) more than anticipated, Personal income tax showed a strong performance, coming in 6.8 percent over estimate. Sales and use taxes also exceeded estimates by 2.2 percent, with non-auto beating estimates by 1.9 percent and auto sales coming in 3.7 above estimate.

The full preliminary revenue report from OBM can be accessed [here](#).

Local drug task forces to receive \$2.3 million in state funds

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced on Wednesday that more than two dozen local drug task forces in Ohio are receiving state support for their work to disrupt the drug trade and promote substance use awareness, prevention, and recovery.

Nearly \$2.3 million in grants from Governor DeWine’s RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Fund will be awarded among 30 existing drug task forces to help them identify high-level drug traffickers, dismantle large drug trafficking organizations, interrupt the flow of money and drugs from international cartels, and prevent the sale of illegal narcotics to those suffering from substance use disorder.

“I’m committed to supporting our local drug task forces, which are working hard to stop the cartels that continuously push drugs into our communities, causing crime and addiction,” said Governor DeWine.

Grant funding will also be used to support the mission of Governor DeWine’s [RecoveryOhio](#) initiative, which aims to increase substance use and mental health awareness, implement age-appropriate prevention education in schools, connect those who need help with treatment, and promote recovery.

The program is administered by the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services.

2022 RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Grants		
RECOVERY Ohio		
Task Force	Grant Amount	Counties Served
METROCH Enforcement Unit	\$124,191.49	Ashland, Crawford, Hancock, Huron, Marion, Morrow, Richland, Seneca, Wyandot
CEARC Drug Outreach Program	\$96,997.73	Ashabula
South Central Ohio Major Crimes Unit	\$246,934.81	Athens, Fairfield, Hocking, Pickaway
BURN Drug Task Force	\$20,000.00	Burton, Preble
LEAD Drug Task Force	\$146,785.02	Carroll, Holmes, Harrison, Tuscawawas
Clermont County Drug Unit	\$157,954.01	Clermont
Columbiana County Drug Task Force	\$31,362.77	Columbiana
Central Ohio Drug Enforcement Task Force	\$94,800.00	Coshocton, Guernsey, Knox, Licking, Muskingum, Perry
Central Ohio Drug Enforcement Task Force	\$20,000.00	Cuyahoga
Southwest Area Law Enforcement Task Force	\$20,000.00	Cuyahoga
Washington Enforcement Bureau	\$68,516.83	Cuyahoga
Multi-Area Narcotics Unit	\$18,371.25	Delfrance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Putnam, Williams
U.S. 23 Major Crimes Task Force	\$20,000.00	Fayette, Highland, Hocking, Pickaway, Pike, Ross
Greene County A23 Task Force	\$126,558.54	Greene
Drug Abuse Reduction Task Force	\$21,579.75	Hamilton
Hamilton County Heroin Task Force & ORT	\$237,579.25	Hamilton
Lake County Narcotics Agency	\$72,352.62	Lake
Lawrence County Drug Major Crimes Task Force	\$56,725.76	Lawrence
Lorain County Drug Task Force	\$79,467.80	Lorain
Mahoning Valley Law Enforcement Task Force	\$20,000.00	Mahoning, Trumbull
Medina County Drug Task Force	\$20,000.00	Medina
RANGE Task Force	\$45,468.20	Montgomery
Ottawa County Regional Task Force	\$114,144.35	Ottawa
Portage County Drug Task Force	\$18,588.50	Portage
Sandusky County Drug Task Force	\$20,000.00	Sandusky
Southern Ohio Drug Task Force	\$6,900.00	Scioto
Savannah County Drug Unit	\$197,364.98	Seminole
TAC Drug Task Force	\$20,000.00	Trumbull
Greater Warren County Drug Task Force	\$86,776.59	Warren, Clinton
NICOWAY Drug Enforcement Agency	\$165,169.52	Wayne