



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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CCAO President Glenn Miller provides testimony on Substitute House Bill 33, the state's operating budget

On Thursday, CCAO President and Henry County Commissioner Glenn Miller [testified](#) before the House Finance Committee on its substitute bill for the state operating budget, [House Bill 33](#) (Representative Jay Edwards).

President Miller discussed the critical importance of indigent defense reimbursement in the budget. The House Substitute Bill decreases funding for reimbursement from the Executive Budget by \$48 million over the biennium (as a context note, the appropriations in the House Substitute Bill do still represent a modest increase from the current biennium). The Office of the Public Defender estimates that the level of funding in the House Substitute Bill would provide about 78% reimbursement.

President Miller noted that CCAO is supportive of the \$75 per hour cap on reimbursement to help maintain the targeted percentage level of reimbursement by helping prevent a significant rate increase in one county from consuming an inordinate amount of the appropriation.

Representative Gail Pavliga (R-Portage County) asked a clarifying question asking if it's the position of the Association that CCAO supports a phased-in state takeover of the indigent defense system. President Miller affirmed that, noting that since the counties are essentially a middleman in the system, it would function more efficiently if counties were removed from the process and the state administered it.

President Miller thanked the committee for two other important provisions. First, the increase in the appropriation for county jail projects. In the Executive Budget, there was \$25 million available in each fiscal year; the House Substitute Bill increases the funding to \$100 million each year. This massive investment will help fund even more badly needed projects across the state.

Second, the House Substitute Bill included a long-needed revision to statutory bidding thresholds and the allowable difference between a public improvement project's estimated cost and the contract price. The bidding threshold increases from \$50,000 to \$75,000; while this is less than the language in the CCAO Platform, the provision includes an annual 3% increase beginning in 2025. The allowable difference provisions increases the allowable percentage difference from 10% to 20%.

These changes will help make government operations more efficient and help counties, along with other local governments, get vital projects operational in a timely manner.

Please refer to President Miller's testimony for his comments on changes to the Local Government Fund that were included in the House Substitute Bill.

Representative Dan Troy (D-Willowick), himself a former Lake County Commissioner and CCAO President, asked a question concerning a provision that would require the board of county commissioners of a county to pass a supporting resolution before the Ohio Housing Finance Agency can utilize its resources to support a housing project in the county. President Miller made it clear that it was not a provision that the Association asked for and that it's a provision CCAO would like removed.

You can view President Miller's testimony on the [House Finance Committee archive](#), beginning at the 03:07:07 mark.

CCAO provides analysis of Substitute House Bill 33

This week, the House adopted its substitute bill for [House Bill 33](#), the state's main operating budget. CCAO has completed a comprehensive, but not necessarily exhaustive, accounting of changes in the bill that relate to counties. Due to the length of the document, it is provided as an addendum to this edition of the *Statehouse Report*.

[You can access it here](#). If you have questions regarding any of the provisions listed in the addendum, please contact the appropriate member of the Policy Team:

- [Kyle Petty](#), Managing Director of Policy, for questions regarding public safety and criminal justice provisions.
- [Jon Honeck](#), Senior Policy Analyst, for questions regarding financial, taxation, and economic development provisions.
- [Rachel Reedy](#), Outreach & Member Engagement Manager, for questions regarding health and human services provisions.
- [James Kennedy](#), Policy Analyst, for questions regarding agriculture and water quality provisions.
- [Nick Ciolli](#), Research Analyst, for questions regarding any type of provisions.

Governor Mike DeWine announces county jail grant recipients

In the capital budget passed in 2022, there was included \$25 million in each of State Fiscal Year 2023 and SFY 2024. On Thursday, April 20, 2023, The DeWine-Husted Administration announced the details of projects that will be funded through that appropriation. Projects fall into three categories: construction/renovation, security upgrades, and needs/feasibility assessments.

The counties that will receive funding are:

- Construction/Renovation Projects:
 - Auglaize County: \$2,035,970
 - Columbiana County: \$462,500
 - Greene County: \$15,000,000
 - Lucas County: \$10,065,000
 - Wayne County: \$15,000,000

- Williams County: \$4,662,756
- Security Upgrades:
 - Carroll County: \$227,300
 - Hancock County: \$248,480
- Needs/Feasibility Assessments:
 - Jackson County: \$1,000,000
 - Miami County: \$175,000
 - Ottawa County: \$350,000

“Ensuring public safety is one of the most important services that counties provide,” said CCAO President and Henry County Commissioner Glenn Miller, “and the robust partnership with state leaders to keep county jails well-funded to make needed improvements to address the complex needs that jail populations have is vital to the provision of that service. CCAO expresses deep thanks to the Administration and the General Assembly for their support in keeping the public safe and ensuring that justice-involved individuals are kept in humane environments and receive mental health and addiction services that they may need.”

CCAO is actively working with the Ohio House of Representatives on additional funding for jail construction and renovation projects in the operations budget. As referenced in the prior two articles, the Executive Budget included an additional \$25 million in each fiscal year to fund more projects; the House Substitute Bill increases that to an additional \$100 million in each fiscal year.

CCAO thanks the DeWine-Husted Administration and the General Assembly for their strong support for this vital component of the state-county partnership.

Legislative Activity

Floor Sessions

The following bills that may be of interest to counties were acted upon by the noted chamber of the General Assembly:

House of Representatives (April 19)

- [House Bill 31](#) (Representative Jay Edwards): Worker’s Compensation Budget
 - PASSED 88-4
- [House Bill 32](#) (Representative Jay Edwards): Industrial Commission Budget
 - PASSED 92-1

Senate (April 19)

- [Senate Bill 92](#) (Senator Rob McColley and Senator Teresa Gavarone): To allow a special election to be held in August for certain purposes and to make an appropriation.
 - PASSED 25-8

Committee Hearings

The following committees held hearings that included bills that may be of interest to counties:

Senate Financial Institutions & Technology

- [Senate Bill 50](#) (Senator Steve Wilson and Senator Kent Smith): To make changes to the law governing 9-1-1 service and to repeal program requirements for emergency-service telecommunicator training.

- Fourth hearing; interested party testimony from the Ohio Telecom Association and CTIA.

Senate Government Oversight

- [Senate Bill 23](#) (Senator George Lang): To expand political subdivision joint purchasing authority to expressly include purchases for construction services. *(CCAO supports this bill)*
 - Fourth hearing; opponent testimony from the Construction Industry Coalition.
 - **REPORTED** out of committee by a vote of 3-2
- [Senate Bill 91](#) (Senator Tim Schaffer): Regards fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds.
 - First hearing; sponsor testimony.

Senate Government

- [Senate Bill 92](#) (Senator Rob McColley and Senator Teresa Gavarone): To allow a special election to be held in August for certain purposes and to make an appropriation.
 - Third hearing (April 18); opponent testimony from Ohio Families Unite for Political Action and Change, Innovation Ohio, Common Cause Ohio, and the Auglaize County Board of Elections.
 - Fourth hearing (April 19); no testimony
 - **REPORTED** out of committee by a vote of 4-1

House Ways & Means

- [House Bill 57](#) (Representative Thomas Hall and Representative Steve Demetriou): To index the homestead exemption amounts to inflation.
 - Fourth hearing; no testimony
 - **REPORTED** out of committee unanimously.
- [House Bill 60](#) (Representative Dan Troy): To increase the amount of and expand the income qualifications for the homestead exemption.
 - Fourth hearing, no testimony
- [House Bill 1](#) (Representative Adam Mathews): To modify the law regarding property taxation and income taxes.
 - Sixth hearing; opponent testimony from the Ohio Education Association, the Marysville Exempted Village School District, the League of Women Voters of Ohio, and a private citizen.

Upcoming Committee Hearings

The following committees are currently scheduled to meet and discuss bills that may be of interest to counties. Other committees will likely meet as well but as of press time for *Statehouse Report* they have not released agendas. Please note that these schedules are subject to change.

If you would like to offer testimony on any bill, please visit the committee page and contact the committee chair's office for instructions on how to submit testimony.

Tuesday, April 25

[House Families and Aging](#) (2:30 p.m.)

- [House Bill 7](#) (Representative Andrea White and Representative Latyna Humphrey) Enact the Strong Foundations Act
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
 - Possible Substitute Bill (*bill is currently an intent bill, this hearing will likely adopt the actual language*)

House Ways and Means (2:30 p.m.)

- [House Bill 90](#) (Representative Tom Patton) Authorize property tax exemption for disabled veterans, spouses
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 118](#) (Representative Nick Santucci and Representative Melanie Miller): To exempt certain baby products from the sales and use tax.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony.
- [House Bill 1](#) (Representative Adam Mathews): To modify the law regarding property taxation and income tax rates.
 - Seventh hearing, all testimony.