



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services announces regional forensic stakeholder meetings

Recently, Governor DeWine announced the creation of a workgroup to provide recommendations on mental health and psychiatric care in Ohio's criminal justice system. Specifically, the workgroup will look at court ordered psychiatric beds at state mental health hospitals, also called forensic beds, and mental health treatment options in county jails. Details on the makeup of the workgroup are forthcoming, but CCAO sent a letter to Governor DeWine asking for CCAO to have representation on the workgroup.

In conjunction with this announcement, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) announced that they will be holding six regional meetings with stakeholders to gather information to assist with the Governor's workgroup. Specifically, the purpose of these meetings is to develop a shared understanding of the current Competency to Stand Trial process and look at possible solutions by:

- Describing the scope and experience of the adult community support team (CST) process in each region;
- Identifying local crisis system strengths and needs related to the CST process;
- Exploring specific strategies to improve outcomes for CST-involved adults;
- Examining opportunities for collaboration on new and/or existing projects;
- Determining priorities and funding gaps related to CST system needs.

The meetings will be organized by Regional Psychiatric Hospital catchment regions, which [can be found here](#).

We would like to have a commissioner or an appropriate staff member present at each meeting to provide the board of county commissioners' perspective on this important issue. If you are interested in attending, please contact Managing Director of Policy Kyle Petty at kpetty@ccao.org or at 740-503-6088.

The department has asked for RSVP's by **Friday, March 29** (next Friday). The location for each meeting will be sent out closer to the date of the meeting, but the schedule for the meetings can be found below:

Heartland region: April 19, from 9:30 AM-2:30 PM

Northcoast region: April 26, from 9:30 AM-2:30 PM

Twin Valley region: May 3, from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

Summit region (southern Ohio): May 29 or May 31 (TBD) 10:30 AM-3:30 PM

Appalachian region: June 7, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

Northwest region: June 12, 9:00 AM-2:00 PM

General Assembly primary elections will result in at least 26 new members for the next General Assembly, with numerous CCAO formers seeking seats

After Tuesday's primary elections, the [match ups for General Assembly seats were set](#). The entire House of Representatives is up for election (99 seats) and the even numbered districts in the Senate are up for election (16 seats). Considering seats where the incumbent didn't run or lost their primary, there will be at least 26 new legislators in the next General Assembly; one in the Senate and the remaining 25 in the House.

Five incumbents lost their primaries. These include:

- Elliot Forhan (House-21, Democrat)
- Sara Carruthers (House-45, Republican)
- Brett Hillyer (House-51, Republican)
- Gail Pavliga (House-72, Republican)
- Jon Cross (House-83, Republican)

Additionally, several sitting legislators ran for a seat in the opposite chamber. These include:

- Stephanie Kunze (Senate-16, Republican, seeking House-11)
- Senate President Matt Huffman (Senate-12, Republican, seeking House-78)
- Willis Blackshear (House-38, Democrat, seeking Senate-6)
- Susan Manchester (House-78, Republican, seeking Senate-12)
- Beth Liston (House-8, Democrat, seeking Senate-16)
- Tom Patton (House-17, Republican, seeking Senate-24)
- Casey Weinstein (House-34, Democrat, seeking Senate-28)

Several current or former CCAO members are seeking General Assembly seats, either as an incumbent or as a new legislator. These include:

- Dan Troy (Former Lake County Commissioner and two-time CCAO President, Democrat, House-23)
- Veronica Sims (Former Summit County Council Member, Democrat, House-34)

- Brian Stewart (Former Pickaway County Commissioner and CCAO Board Member, Republican, House-12)
- Bill Roemer (Former Summit County Council Member, Republican, House-31)
- Rodney Creech (Former Preble County Commissioner, Republican, House-40)
- Sharon Ray (Former Medina County Commissioner, Republican, House-66)
- Marilyn John (Former Richland County Commissioner, Republican, House-76)
- Roy Klopfenstein (Former Paulding County Commissioner, Republican, House-82)
- Bob Peterson (Former Fayette County Commissioner, Republican, House-91)
- Speaker of the House Jason Stephens (Former Lawrence County Commissioner, Republican, House-93)
- Kevin Ritter (Current Washington County Commissioner, Republican, House-94)
- Jerry Cirino (Former Lake County Commissioner, Republican, Senate-18)

Two other former CCAO members, Shane Wilkin (former Highland County Commissioner, Republican, Senate-17) and Al Landis (former Tuscarawas County Commissioner, Republican, Senate-31) are not up for reelection this year and will remain in the General Assembly.

Additionally, two former CCAO members are leaving the General Assembly. Scott Wiggam (former Wayne County Commissioner, Republican, House-77) won the Republican nomination for Wayne County Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas and Bob Hackett (Former Madison County Commissioner, Republican, Senate-10) is term-limited and did not seek election to a different office.

CCAO provides comments on LSC Local Impact Statement Report

Earlier this month, the [Legislative Service Commission \(LSC\)](#) published its 2024 Local Impact Statement Report, which covers bills enacted during 2023. The report, required by law, compiles the LSC Fiscal Notes for enacted legislation that required local impact statements from the prior year.

The only bill included in the report is Senate Bill 10, which amended Ohio's income tax law to conform to federal IRS income tax changes.

As part of the report, LSC is required to offer CCAO, the Ohio Municipal League, the Ohio Township Association, and the Ohio School Boards Association to provide comments. The full report, as well as links to the comments from the other local government associations, [can be found here](#).

CCAO's comments, accessible [here](#), focus on suggestions to LSC on how to improve the agency's analysis of how provisions of enacted legislation will affect counties. Two of these are summarized below, but the full response provides more in-depth explanations.

A Local Government Provisions greenbook

After the state operating budget is enacted, LSC produces "greenbooks" for each state agency. These documents provide explanations and limited analysis of budget provisions

that pertain to the applicable agency. Although the budget typically includes many provisions that affect local governments, these are not centralized in any one document; instead, they are contained in either the state agency that the provisions are connected to (such as the Job and Family Services greenbook for provisions that assign more requirements to county JFS agencies) or are not discussed in any greenbook.

This omission not only makes it more difficult for local government officials to find budget provisions that will affect them, but it also can inadvertently obscure legislators' understanding of how the budget will affect their constituent local governments.

Publish the rationale behind local impact determinations

When bills are introduced, LSC studies them and determines whether they will have a significant fiscal impact on local governments. There are various reasons why LSC may find that a bill does not impose a significant fiscal effect, but the reasoning behind such determinations is never shared outside of the analyst assigned to the bill and the division chief under whose subject area the bill falls within.

Publishing the rationale behind the determinations can help legislators better understand why they were made and allow local governments to discuss their accuracy with the General Assembly. For example, a bill that imposes a cost on each county may be found not to impose a significant effect at the aggregate level, but as Statehouse Report readers know, impacts can vary significantly across the 88 counties. If a provision is estimated to cost \$100,000 per county, that may not prove significant to counties with large general fund revenues but could be for counties with smaller revenues.

If you have feedback on the local impact determination process that you believe should be shared with LSC, please share it with [Managing Director of Policy Kyle Petty](#) and [Research Analyst Nick Ciolli](#) so we can include it in next year's CCAO comments.