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April 7, 2025

CEBCO Managing Director Mike Kindell and CEBCO Vice President and Huron County Commissioner Harry Brady at the 2025 CEBCO Annual Meeting last Friday.

CEBCO thanked Kindell, who will be retiring at the end of next month, for his 12 years of service and leadership, including the last five years as Managing Director.

Association and Member News | State and Federal News |
Education and Grants | County News |
Job Postings

Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

---

ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

Back to Top

Former Clark County Commissioner passes away

David Herier, who served as Clark County Commissioner in 2015 and 2016 to serve out an unexpired term, passed away recently.

David was currently serving as a Magistrate in both the Clark County Court of Common Pleas and the Clark County Municipal Court.

In addition to his work as a county commissioner and as a court magistrate, David served on the board for the Clark County branch of the American Red Cross, Springfield Christian Youth Ministries, and the Nehemiah Foundation.

House to complete operating budget process this week, Governor signs transportation budget with no vetoes

The House is expected to complete its operating budget process this week, with the adoption of an omnibus amendment and Finance Committee vote likely on Tuesday and a floor vote likely on Wednesday. The bill (House Bill 96) will then go to the Senate.

CCAO priorities have generally fared well through the House process thus far. The substitute bill adopted last week included the following changes related to CCAO priorities:

- Maintained the $25 million increase in SFY 2026 and a $30 million increase in SFY 2027 in the State Child Protection Allocation (SCPA).
- Largely maintained $20 million in SFY 2026 and $10 million in SFY 2027 to assist communities in starting regional child wellness campuses.
- Maintained language that establishes a process for the Department of Children and Youth to increase cost transparency and predictability for placement costs.
- Increased funding for indigent defense reimbursement by $21.75 million in each fiscal year, which will resulted in an expected 85% reimbursement.
- Maintained language and funding for a state administered indigent defense pilot.
- Increased the Next Generation 9-1-1 monthly user fee from $0.40 to $0.60.
- Reduced eligibility for publicly funded child care to 145% of the federal poverty level (FPL) from 160% FPL in the executive proposal.
- Removed funding for jail construction projects from the executive budget proposal.
- Required the Ohio Department of Medicaid to submit an 1115 waiver to allow for Medicaid coverage of a 30-day supply of medication, behavioral health, mental health, and substance abuse treatments for the incarcerated population.

A thorough overview of county-related provisions of the bill as the House nears completion can be found on CCAO's Bill Tracker page for the budget.

In other budgetary news, last week Governor Mike DeWine signed the transportation budget (House Bill 54) into law without issuing any line item vetoes. An overview of the transportation budget can also be found on the Bill Tracker. The bill's provisions will take effect on July 1, 2025.

Celebrate National County Government Month – April 2025! 🎉

April is here, and that means it's time to celebrate **National County Government Month (NCGM)**! CCAO is excited to recognize the vital role counties play in serving and strengthening communities across Ohio.

To make this year's celebration impactful, we're inviting you to participate in two key ways:

Educate Your Constituents on Issue 2
This May, Ohio voters will decide on **Issue 2**, the renewal of the Ohio Public Works Program that funds critical infrastructure projects—keeping our roads, bridges, and communities strong and connected. CCAO's Board of Directors has officially endorsed Issue 2, and we encourage you to help inform your residents about its importance.

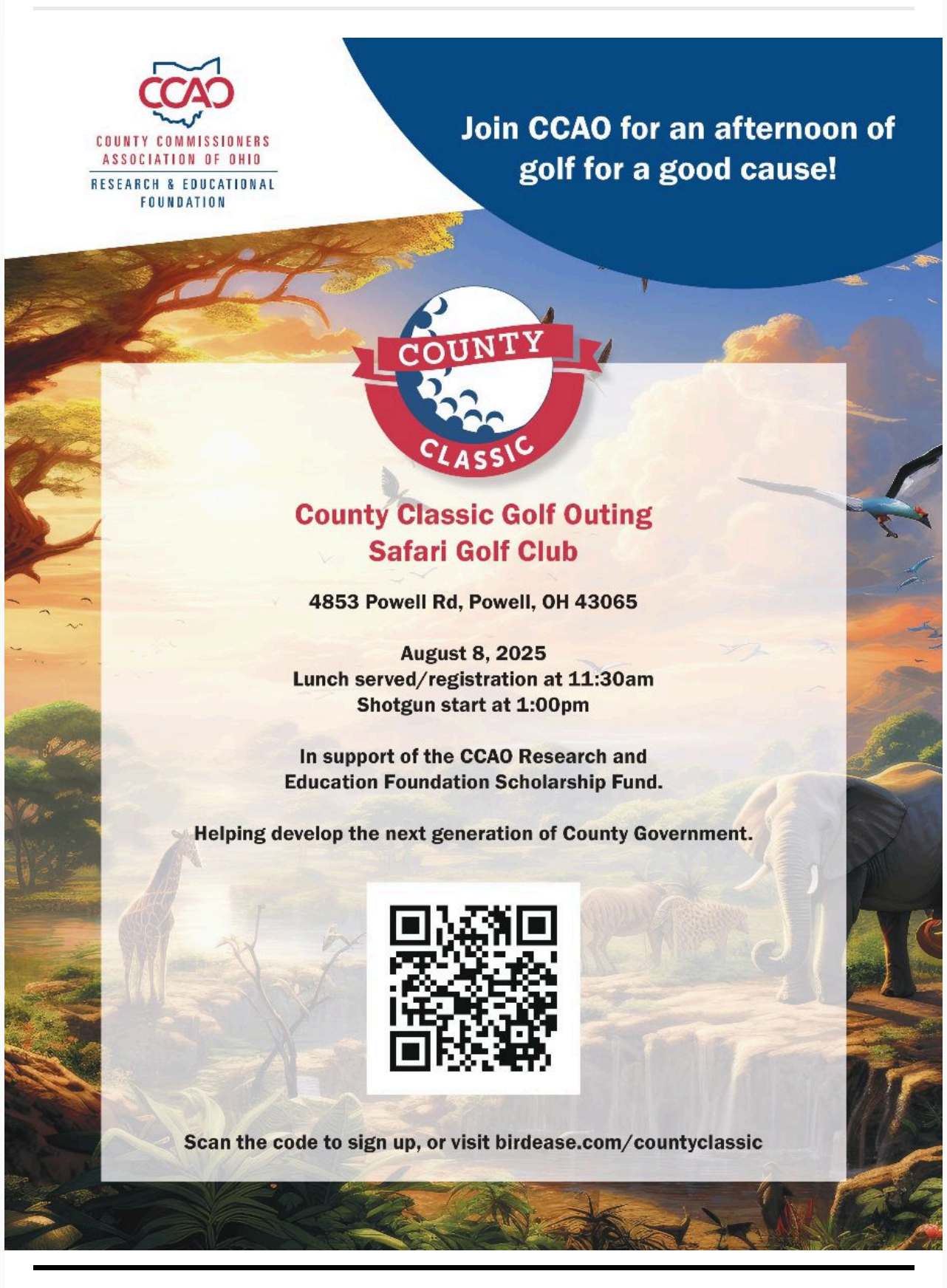
Last week, your county received an Issue 2 Toolkit with a sample resolution and other resources that are designed to educate your constituents on the fact that they May election is right around the corner and the positive impact that Issue 2 has in all 88 counties. Additionally, CCAO will have an allotment of Issue 2 yard signs available. Please reach out to CCAO's Karla Dunbar if you would like some for your county.

Use CCAO's New Educational Videos
We're excited to share two brand-new, engaging videos designed to help showcase the essential role of county government:

- **Video 1**: Highlights how counties impact residents' daily lives.
- **Video 2**: Features the work of County Commissioners, Executives, and Council members.

Each CCAO member will receive a flash drive with both videos, perfect for presentations to schools, civic groups, and local organizations. These videos pair perfectly with last year's *Ohio Counties Matter* publication. Need extra copies of Ohio Counties Matter or the videos? Reach out to Steve Caraway at scaraway@ccao.org.

Let's make National County Government Month a time to educate, inspire, and celebrate the hard work counties do every day! Thank you for your dedication to Ohio's counties and communities.


CCAO
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO
RESEARCH & EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
COUNTY CLASSIC

Join CCAO for an afternoon of golf for a good cause!

County Classic Golf Outing
Safari Golf Club

4853 Powell Rd, Powell, OH 43065

August 8, 2025
Lunch served/registration at 11:30am
Shotgun start at 1:00pm

In support of the CCAO Research and Education Foundation Scholarship Fund.

Helping develop the next generation of County Government.

Scan the code to sign up, or visit birdease.com/countyclassic

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STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

Back to Top

US Treasury to hold webinars on reporting over next two weeks, intends to enhance review of ARPA obligation deadline

To support counties in preparing their 2025 Annual or Q1 Project and Expenditure (P&E) Reports – due **April 30, 2025** – the U.S. Department of the Treasury is offering a workshop series for all ARPA recipients.

These webinars will equip county staff with tools, updates and guidance to successfully complete upcoming reporting requirements. Topics will include:

1. P&E Report Content
2. Common Reporting Errors
3. Noncompliance Issues
4. Debt Management

The webinars will cover the same material and will be made available online. The webinars will be held on Wednesday, April 9 at 2:00 p.m. and Tuesday, April 15 at 2:00 p.m.

CCAO will share the recorded materials when they are available.

Additionally, US Department of Treasury recently announced that it intends to enhance compliance checks on the obligation data submitted by counties as part of its efforts to ensure taxpayer funds are used in accordance with program requirements. As a reminder, all ARPA funds were required to be obligated by December 31, 2024. Treasury intends to recoup funds obligated or expended impermissibly and to recapture funds that were not obligated by the deadline. Counties that are deemed noncompliant with the obligation deadline will receive "Information Document Requests."

Treasury also will begin sending "Financial Instructions to Return Unobligated Funds" to counties that did not fully obligate their award funds by the Dec. 31, 2025 deadline, based on the latest data available to Treasury. These instructions will:

1. Inform the county how much it owes, based on its most recently submitted report.
2. Provide a date by which funds must be repaid.
3. Require recipients to use Pay.gov to process the repayments.

If a county does not repay amounts owed by the specified date, Treasury will establish a debt and follow standard debt collection policy and procedures in coordination with the Bureau of the Fiscal Service. Interest and penalties will accrue once the debt is established.

If you have issues with the Treasury portal or has received a noncompliance email, but believe you are in compliance, please share your county name and Treasury case number with Research Analyst Nick Ciolli and he will help you get in contact with NACo to resolve the issue.

Auditor of State issues bulletin on compensated absence reporting changes

Last week, Auditor of State Keith Faber issued Bulletin 2025-004 which itself is Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 101 - Compensated Absences. The document outlines changes to the reporting of compensated absences for government entities that prepare Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) Statements. The changes are effective for GAAP financial statements for periods beginning after December 15, 2023.

For the purposes of the bulletin, compensated absences are leave for which employees may receive one or more of the following:

- Cash payments when taking leave for time off
- Cash payments for unused leave upon termination of employment
- Any noncash settlements, including conversion to defined benefit post-employment benefits.

CCAO encourages counties familiarize themselves with the bulletin to ensure that GAAP financial statements are in proper compliance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

Attorney General issues opinion on position compatibility: county bridge inspector and township fiscal officer

Last week, Attorney General Dave Yost issued Attorney General Opinion 2025-006, concerning the compatibility between a county bridge inspector/safety manager and a township fiscal officer in the same county.

The opinion finds the positions compatibility provided the individual, in their role as township fiscal officer, refrains from assisting in the preparation or presentation of the township's budget as it relates to bridge infrastructure projects.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

Back to Top

Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.

Greater Ohio Policy Center hosting Brownfields Conference on May 8

The Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC), in partnership with the Ohio EPA, is hosting the 2025 Ohio Brownfields Conference, to be held on May 8 in Westerville. The conference will provide attendees with panel sessions to learn about the latest in brownfield remediation and redevelopment, connect with environmental professionals, and network with peers from across the state.

Registration can be completed here and costs $185 per attendee.

Attendees can attend sessions about the following subjects:

- Brownfields Funding & Financing
- Remediation and Redevelopment Case Studies
- Public-Private Partnerships in Brownfields Remediation
- Community Planning to Redevelop Brownfields
- Brownfields into Residential Housing
- Brownfields and Land Banks
- Ohio EPA Voluntary Action Program (VAP)

A full schedule, with details about each session, can be found on the event's website.

As with past conferences, GOPC is seeking continuing learning education credits, including AICP credits through APA Ohio, CLE credits through the Ohio Supreme Court, and CP credits through Ohio EPA.

Ohio Realtors Association and Greater Ohio Policy Center release Ohio Housing Toolkit

Housing continues to be a growing issue for our membership and CCAO is always looking for areas of partnership in this area. Over the last couple of months, we have been working with the Ohio Realtors Association and others on regional housing forums. This week, CCAO was happy to support the launch of *Housing Ohio: Tools for Development* by the Ohio Realtors Association and Greater Ohio Policy Center.

This toolkit is designed to promote new housing production and infill development in Ohio by providing three key tools to local governments:

- **A la carte Zoning Adjustments** – Actionable recommendations for zoning code adjustments that eliminate barriers to infill housing and encourage new development. These changes are simple enough to be implemented by city staff without requiring outside consultants.
- **Free Building Plans** – Two pre-designed building plans (a single-family home and a duplex) with multiple variations are available free of charge. These plans help reduce soft costs, such as architectural fees, and can be incorporated into pre-approved plans programs to streamline permitting.
- **Pre-Approved Plans Program Guide** – A detailed roadmap for municipalities to establish a pre-approved plans program, enabling expedited permitting and lowering development barriers in their communities.

COUNTY NEWS

Back to Top

Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

Wood County Job & Family Services braces for federal cuts to food, Medicaid and child abuse programs

BG Independent News, April 3, 2025

Wood County Department of Job and Family Services is bracing for federal funding cuts that will hit local residents with the greatest needs for food, health care, and help keeping children safe.

Worst case scenario – the local office could see a loss of $1.9 million by October.

Wood County JFS Director Dave Wigent presented the possible cuts on Tuesday to the Wood County Commissioners. The Job and Family Services office relies heavily on federal funding, he said.

"We're your only department that's 80% federal funding," minus the local levy, Wigent told the commissioners.

"Our situation isn't if we're going to get cut – but how much we're going to get cut," he said.

Wigent said there seems to be a lack of awareness at the federal level about the need for social service programs.

"I think the federal folks right now don't understand the needs," he said. "There are real practical effects of these cuts. There are tens of millions of Americans on Medicaid – many in red states. I don't think that's been thought through. The optics of social service offices collapsing is not positive for anybody."

Northeast District

County Council shows support for State Issue 2

Akron.com, April 3, 2025

Summit County Council March 31 passed a resolution in support of State Issue 2, the renewal of the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) which voters will see on the May 6 statewide ballot.

The SCIP is a state-local government partnership program that funds local infrastructure projects in communities across Ohio through the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC).

Dennis Tubbs, assistant director for the Department of Community and Economic Development and district liaison for OPWC, said OPWC funds infrastructure programs that help improve communities such as roads, bridges and wastewater plants. He said governments apply for funding, the districts review the funding and then the projects are awarded by the state and construction begins.

"[The SCIP] was originally approved by the direct vote of Ohioans in 1987, and since has been reauthorized three times," said Tubbs, adding that a 'yes' vote on the issue will not increase taxes, as the funding relies on bonds which are paid off with existing state revenue. The funding requires an amendment to Ohio's Constitution about every 10 years.

According to the resolution, the program has provided over $7 billion over the course of nearly 40 years, for improvements to "keep Ohio's roads and bridges safe and in good condition for residents, first responders and all motorists traveling on Ohio roadways," and to "improve local wastewater treatment, water supply and stormwater infrastructure in all 88 Ohio counties."

Tubbs said District 8 receives approximately $10 million for SCIP projects through grant funds and loans, which could help fund projects including the 2025 Sanitary Sewer Reconstruction Project in Akron, Wyoga Lake Road improvements in Cuyahoga Falls and the Elmwood Avenue Waterline replacement in Barberton.

Central District

Knox County considers changes as compost site sees record use

Knox Pages, April 1, 2025

Business is booming at Knox County's Thayer Road compost site.

The county allows commercial businesses, as well as residential users, to drop off trees and brush.

"The volume that has taken place out there may lead us to take a different action," Knox County Commissioner Bill Pursel said at the commissioners' Feb. 27 meeting.

Pursel said other counties do not allow commercial companies to drop off unless there is a mechanism to charge for the service.

County Administrator Jason Booth said the difficulty is enforcement.

"Other counties have someone onsite to monitor that flow during the hours they're open," he said.

The Delaware-Knox-Marion-Morrow Solid Waste District (DKMM) provides the county with up to $30,000 annually, which the county uses to grind material at the compost site.

Southwest District

MCT to receive six new buses

Miami Valley Today, March 31, 2025

The Miami County Commissioners authorized the purchase of six new buses for the Miami County Transit (MCT) department at their meeting on Thursday, March 27.

The costs of new buses are $123,767 each, and will be paid for through grants the commissioners accepted in 2024, which were requested by MCT Director Sarah Baker.

The first three buses will be paid for through the Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program Grant, which the commissioners accepted on March 7, 2024, $291,690 award from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), which will offset costs for said buses, then ODOT will invoice MCT for the county share of $73,626. Additional costs of $1,995 for items not covered under the state contract will also be invoiced to MCT, for a total cost of $75,621.

The other three buses will be paid through the Federal 5339 Bus Facilities Program Funds. On March 7, 2024, the commissioners accepted an award of $364,614. That award will offset costs for said buses, then ODOT will invoice the MCT for the county share of $702. Additional costs of $1,995 for items not covered by MCT will be invoiced to MCT, for a total cost of $2,697.

"These are the replacement buses that will be replacing three of our existing ones that meet their life expectancy," Baker said to the commissioners.

The commissioners also authorized several purchases for the Miami County Highway Garage as requested by County Engineer Paul Huelskamp.

Southeast District

Commissioners review lift station proposal

Free Press Standard, April 3, 2025

Carroll County Commissioners met with Environmental Services Director Roy Ford at their Thursday, March 27, meeting regarding an Engineering Associates Inc. proposal.

Ford asked commissioners to accept an agreement from Engineering Associates to provide engineering services for wastewater lift station replacement and upgrades.

Commissioners approved that the proposal be sent to the prosecutor for approval on the condition that the prosecutor review and accept it. This is still part of the preliminary process.

Ford and Commissioner Chris Modranski began working with the Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) on funding sources for the project. This proposal is the first step in getting the process underway to seek federal funding.

Ford said there are 11 manholes with pump stations that need to be repaired in the Lake Mohawk/Malvern area, with the majority located in Lake Mohawk.

Commissioner Modranski and Commissioner Donald Leggett II asked Ford what would happen if a station failed and whether he has a plan.

"We have a vacuum truck that could suck the water out," said Ford. "I also have contacts with rental companies if I need to rent several pumps."

Ford was asked how long it would take to fill up again after the vacuum truck removed the water. He answered that it would take three to four hours before the truck would have to return to that spot and do it again.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

Back to Top

APRIL 7
Madison County Regional Legislative Briefing

APRIL 8
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting
OCCO Legislative Reception

APRIL 11
Defiance County Regional Legislative Briefing

APRIL 14
Southeast District Meeting

APRIL 21
Licking County Regional Legislative Briefing

APRIL 24 - 25
CEBCO Board Retreat

APRIL 25
Columbiana County Regional Legislative Briefing

APRIL 28
Ross County Regional Legislative Briefing

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