COUNTIES CURRENT
CCAO
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

November 10, 2025

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the CORSA Board of Directors!

L to R: Mark Stahl, Ottawa County, Treasurer; Charlie Schilling, Washington County, Secretary; Gary Merrell, Delaware County, Vice President; Craig LaHote, Wood County, President.

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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Former Hancock County Commissioner passes away

Late in October, former Hancock County Commissioner Virginia "Ginny" Clymer passed away at the age of 93.

Ginny was the the first woman to be elected as Hancock County Commissioner in 1992. She would go on to serve 12 years in the position, retiring at the end of 2004.

Before her service as county commissioner, Ginny served for more than five years on the Findlay City Council. Outside of public service, she spent time with Marathon Oil Company, RCA, and National Lime & Stone.

You can view Ginny's full obituary here.

County property tax levies fair well at the November 2025 ballot box

On Tuesday, Ohioans headed to the polls to vote on a number of county tax issues. CCAO tracked 68 property tax levies, four sales tax levies, and one other issue (a Summit County Charter amendment). This article will only discuss the property tax levy results.

The full results table can be accessed here.

Property Taxes
Property taxes are the main source of revenue for many county functions, especially human services functions such as developmental disabilities boards, children services, and ADAMHs boards, among others. This week's elections were the first since a ballot initiative to fully eliminate property taxation began gathering signatures.

Of the 68 property tax levies that CCAO followed, 57 passed (a rate of 84%). Twenty-nine of the levies were for new money; of those, 18 passed (a rate of 62%). The remaining 39 levies were renewals; only one of those failed to pass.

Of note is that yesterday was the last election at which entities could put a replacement tax on the ballot. There were 13 county issues on the ballot as replacements; ten passed and three failed to pass. The replacement tax levy type was eliminated following successful General Assembly veto overrides over the summer and autumn.

There were two results that fell within the 0.50% margin and could change. These were a children services renewal and increase in Clermont County (unofficial results have the levy failing to pass) and an ADAMHS replacement levy in Tuscarawas County (unofficial results have it passing).

The following article includes information on prior elections.

Sales Taxes
On the sales tax front, there were two renewal levies and two new money request levies. The renewals both passed (Athens County for 9-1-1, Auglaize County for the general fund) while both new money requests failed to pass (Clark County for its jail and Lorain County for criminal justice purposes).

With the results, 51 counties remain at the maximum rate of 1.50%. With their renewals, Athens County and Auglaize County remain at 1.50%. Clark County is also at the maximum rate of 1.50%, but was trying to use the special additional 0.50% authority for jails.

Since that authority was enacted, Coshocton County has successfully utilized it while Lawrence County and now Clark County have both been unsuccessful at enacting it.

Lorain County is currently at 1.00%; its levy would have increased the county's rate to 1.25%.

Other Issues
Finally, the Summit County charter amendment to cap the county's unvoted property tax revenue increases at 3% passed. The Summit County charter proposal was the impetus for CCAO's advocacy of an inflation cap on inside millage revenue growth.

County levies passage rate analysis

Last week's election was the first held in Ohio since an effort to eliminate property taxation began gathering signatures. As such, the results may provide some insight into the electorate's attitude towards the taxation of property.

As discussed in the prior article, county levies that CCAO tracked passed at a rate of 84% (57 passed, 11 failed to pass). This rate represents a slight decrease from the prior two elections, as shown in Table 1, but still shows that county levies enjoy broad popular support.

Table 1. County Property Tax Levies and Passage Rate, 2023 – 2025

Election	County Levies	Passage Rate
May 2023	9	78%
November 2023	91	92%
March 2024	16	69%
November 2024	79	87%
May 2025	28	89%
November 2025	68	84%

A high passage rate overall suggests that voters are happy with the services they currently receive and find their current tax level acceptable. The passage rate of new money requests, however, offers a better insight into voters' mindsets.

The table below shows the passage rate for new money levies over the period. The 66% passage rate for new levies last week is middle of the pack over the past six elections. While fewer new money requests passed last week when compared to the other elections that saw a high volume of new money levies, 66% is still suggestive of popular support.

Table 2. New Money County Property Tax Levies and Passage Rate, 2023 – 2025

Election	New Money County Levies	Passage Rate
May 2023	3	33%
November 2023	27	74%
March 2024	9	56%
November 2024	28	71%
May 2025	10	80%
November 2025	29	66%

While past results are not a guarantee of future outcomes, the high passage rates of county levies at large and new money county levy requests suggest that Ohioans value the services that counties provide and are accepting of property taxation as a means to pay for those services.

Three and a half weeks until the 2025 CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference!

Click Here to Register!

Registration Fees:

Full Conference $625

One Day Only $480

Spouse or Guest Flat Fee for Full Conference or One Day Only $300

Affiliate Groups Have Option to Choose Meetings Only + Coffee Breaks $175

Sessions at this year's conference will include best practices for energy and economic development, information on data centers, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and changes to the children services landscape.

There will also be five sessions focusing on different aspects of property taxation and the potential ramifications of if property taxation is eliminated.

The full tentative agenda can be viewed here.

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

Anthem

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Federal government shutdown update

The federal government has been shut down since October 1. Last Wednesday, the shutdown became the longest in American history. However, the shutdown may be nearing its end.

Late Sunday evening, major news outlets reported that a deal had been reached in the U.S. Senate between the majority Republican Party and a handful of Democrats, enough to push support for a funding package above the 60 vote threshold to avoid a filibuster. The deal reached would fund the federal government through January and fund SNAP benefits through September.

SNAP has emerged as one of the central focuses of the shutdown for local governments, as the shutdown has prevented November benefit payments from being issued. While the deal appears poised to settle the confusion on SNAP for the next 10 months, the ongoing uncertainty remains. It is unclear how long after a spending plan to end the shutdown is enacted it will take for the normal functioning of SNAP benefits to begin.

Last week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicated it would begin issuing at least 50% of benefits to SNAP recipients. This decision came after a federal judge directed the Department to do so. However, late in the week, a different federal judge ordered the Department to pay the full benefits that recipients traditionally receive.

The U.S. Supreme Court issued an emergency order on Friday to block the full SNAP payments pending an appeal of the order by the Trump Administration. The emergency order will likely cause additional delays for SNAP recipients to receive the partial benefits that the Department of Agriculture began issuing last week.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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Chamber of Commerce to host ImpactOhio event on future of property taxation

Next Wednesday (November 19), the Ohio Chamber of Commerce will host an event to discuss the last year of property tax reforms and examine what the future may hold.

The event, which will be held at the Chamber's building in downtown Columbus, will feature two sessions. The first will focus on reform proposals in the General Assembly and other potential future efforts. The session will be moderated by Michael Stinziano, the Franklin County Auditor, and feature the the Ohio Education Association, Ohio REALTORS, and state representatives Dan Troy and David Thomas as panelists.

The second session will highlight the potential future of property taxation and local government funding systems. It will be moderated by Pickaway County Commissioner Gary Scherer and feature Americans for Property, Policy Matters Ohio, Tom Zaino, and State Senator Louis Blessing as panelists.

Registration costs $49 and can be completed here.

CCAO is a presenting sponsor for the event.

Ohio Grants Summit now open for registration

Registration for the 2025 Ohio Grants Summit is now open. The three-day virtual event requires separate registration for each day. The event recordings have traditionally been available on the Ohio Channel as well.

The event will be held from December 9 to December 11 and is hosted by the Office of Budget and Management. Registration for each day is free. Links and brief descriptions of the day's events are below.

Day One: Grant writing strategies and how to utilize AI tools.

Day Two: Fraud prevention, how to close out grants, and insight into the future of federal funding.

Day Three: Burn rate monitoring, transformational grant making, and proper oversight of indirect costs.

6th ANNUAL
Ohio Grants Summit
Ohio Office of Budget and Management
SAVE THE DATE!
Dec. 9 - 11, 2025 | 9 a.m. - Noon
Grants.Ohio.gov

COUNTY NEWS

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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
Improvements made to Defiance County East wellness trail to enhance health
Crescent News, October 31, 2025
Defiance County commissioners, the Defiance County Health Department and the Defiance County Wellness Committee have announced upgrades to a trail behind the Defiance County East Complex, 1300 E. Second St.

What was once a stone path has been transformed into a fully paved mental health and wellness trail with support and funding from the county commissioners, a $20,000 Defiance Area Foundation grant and a $19,351 NatureWorks grant through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, according to a media release from the health department.

This upgrade provides a smoother and more accessible surface for all community members year-round.

Additional funds were provided by the county to install workout stations along the trail. These funds were recommended for use on the trail by the wellness committee for the last two years and totaled $19,000. The stations, designed for both children and adults, encourage physical activity and promote health and wellness in the community.

The trail can be accessed from these nearby facilities: the Defiance County East building, the county sheriff's office, Maumee Valley Guidance Center or Mercy Health-Defiance Hospital.

The trail features four exercise stations, offering equipment for upper and lower body workouts. This includes balance steps, pull-up bars, a seated and wheelchair accessible chest press and stretching stations for users of all ages and fitness levels.

"Walking was reported in the 2024 community health assessment as the number one physical activity," said Defiance County Health Commissioner Jamie Gerken. "Updating this trail to be inclusive and to add evidence-based activities to reduce stress and anxiety has been a goal for some time. We are thankful to the Defiance County commissioners, the NatureWorks grant and the Defiance Area Foundation for providing these improvements and future plans for the Defiance community."

Northeast District
Unpaid security crew at Southern Park Mall prompted temporary closure in Boardman, Ohio
WKBN, November 6, 2025
Mahoning County Commissioners are still voicing concerns over the ownership of the Southern Park Mall in Boardman.

This week, WKBN 27 First News reported that the doors to the mall concourses were locked for several hours on Monday when security guards walked off the job after not being paid. That left Commissioner Carol Righetti particularly upset with the mall's owners.

"They're not good stewards to Mahoning County nor to Boardman Township. I mean, they started off not paying their taxes, and then they locked the doors at the place because they didn't pay their security guards," said Righetti. "I mean, if you were going to come to Mahoning County and want to be a vibrant store, mall owner, whatever it is that you wanted here, don't come here to lock the doors and leave it vacant. And then what? Have a big dump in Boardman?"

Right now, Kohan Retail Investments, the mall's owner, has yet to make a property tax payment. It owes just over $1 million in taxes and fees for the last 12 months

Central District
Columbus, Franklin County dole out more than $1 million in support for local SNAP recipients
WOSU Public Media, November 3, 2025
The Trump administration said Monday that it would partially fund SNAP after a pair of judges ruled that officials had to keep the food aid program running.

At about the same time, Columbus and Franklin County leaders gathered at St. Stephens Community House in South Liden to announce more than $3 million in support for recipients of the program whose benefits lapsed over the weekend because of the federal government shutdown.

Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther said the local resources would not fill the gap in need for long.

"What we're talking about is a short-term approach to a crisis, but this is not sustainable," Ginther said.

The city of Columbus and Franklin County Commissioners each gave $500,000 to Mid-Ohio Food Collective to address immediate hunger.

Matt Habash, president of Mid-Ohio Food Collective, said 1.4 million Ohioans, including around 320,000 people in the 20 counties MOFC serves, rely on SNAP benefits.

"Please understand, food banks cannot make up for the loss of SNAP benefits. SNAP, which many of you know as food stamps, is America's first and best defense against hunger," Habash said.

Habash was grateful for the support of the city and the county, and noted that the state of Ohio had also provided temporary funding for food banks to help Ohio's poorest residents.

"But the sheer size of SNAP and the pain of its loss will still be felt until the federal government finishes its work," Habash said. "For now, it's up to Ohioans to help one another."

The federal government had been providing about $31 million in SNAP benefits to people in Franklin County every month.

Southwest District
MC Commissioners OK MCSO purchases
Miami Valley Today, November 3, 2025
The Miami County Commissioners accepted a quote and authorized the purchase of a K9 Transport System as well as body-worn cameras and a Video Manager and In-Car Video Systems for the Miami County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) during their Thursday, Oct. 30 meeting.

The commissioners accepted a quote and authorized the state purchase of one standard K9 Transport System at the request of the MCSO. The commissioners accepted a quote from Parr Public Safety Equipment, Galloway, Ohio, under State Contract No. MMA7671 and authorized the MCSO to purchase the K9 Transport System for their new 2025 Ford Interceptor with a total cost not to exceed $4,173.60. The system is a replacement and will be compatible with the new 2025 Ford Interceptor police vehicle.

The new K9 system and the new 2025 Ford Interceptor have been approved due to the loss of the previous cruiser, which was totaled in a crash on Thursday, Sept. 25, on County Road 25-A underneath Interstate 75 near Exit 78 in Concord Township in Miami County. The MCSO cruiser was struck by a vehicle driven by Chad McMullen of Dayton. Deputy Ryan Thobe and his K9 partner, Officer Vello, were both injured in the crash.

Miami County Sheriff Dave Duchak gave the commissioners an update on Deputy Thobe. "He had a concussion. He had some other injuries. He's doing well." Duchak added that Thobe is not back to work yet after the crash.

Duchak also told the commissioners that the computer cameras and radar was still functional in the totaled vehicle.

"We're using everything we can," Duchak said.

Southeast District
Washington County Commission responds to injection well concerns
News and Sentinel, November 7, 2025
Members from the Washington County for Safe Drinking Water Committee came to the Washington County Commissioners with their concerns in regards to Class I and Class II injection well permits on Thursday.

Some of those present at the meeting included members from the Buckeye Environmental Network who have made an effort to raise awareness about potential migration of waste from the injection wells operating on old state permits.

"We can only learn from each other, we can learn from you what you know and you can learn from us what we know but let's work as a team," said Dee Arnold, a member of the committee. "If you would come to our meetings, I believe you were invited to all these meetings we've had and we've not seen you."

Class I and II injection wells are used to inject hazardous and non-hazardous wastes into isolated rock formations at high pressures, according to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

Marietta City Council recently presented a proposed moratorium to the state with studies collected from geologists and specialists asking for a three-year pause on injection well permits. The council has also established an ad hoc advisory team of specialists who are currently reviewing any effects of the injection wells.

Buckeye Environmental Network Appalachian Organizer Bev Reed said they've conducted thorough research with various specialists and presented some of the findings. Reed said there could be extreme pressure on the abandoned wells and weaknesses within the rocks.

"Those variables and the unknowns add uncertainties to the already complex geologic nature of the subsurface strata," said Reed. "If we inject waste and it moves to upper layers or to a producing aquifer in the city, the damage cannot be undone."

Commissioner Charlie Schilling said the commissioners have worked diligently to ensure the county has safe water.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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NOVEMBER 11
Veterans Day - Holiday

NOVEMBER 14
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

NOVEMBER 21
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

NOVEMBER 27
Thanksgiving - Holiday

DECEMBER 3
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

DECEMBER 3 - 5
CCAO / CEAO Winter Conference

DECEMBER 25
Christmas - Holiday

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