



**County
Commissioners
Association of Ohio**

Serving Ohio Counties Since 1880

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SCR 33

Testimony to the Senate Agriculture Committee By Cheryl Subler, County Commissioners Association of Ohio February 19, 2014

Chairman Hite, Ranking Member Gentile, members of the Senate Agriculture Committee, my name is Cheryl Subler, Managing Director of Policy for the County Commissioners Association of Ohio. It is my pleasure to testify today in support of SCR 33, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Cooperative Extension system and OSU Extension.

Extension is a partnership between county, state and federal government. Since Extension is strictly educational and not regulatory in nature, it is well positioned to fill a niche that other government or private entities cannot. The flexibility that the educators in each county have to work with their county commissioners and local stakeholders to define, within their broad mission areas, what is important in that county and provide it makes Extension unique among government entities.

Recently some of those local needs Extension has been meeting include working with citizens and county government related to the shale drilling and pipeline industry in eastern Ohio.

OSU Extension works with CCAO's wellness coordinator to provide resources to our commissioners to help provide their employees wellness education, decreasing health care costs and absenteeism.

Our Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee took a trip to Stone Lab last fall and members learned first-hand about the research that is being done to keep Lake Erie a healthy, valuable resource.

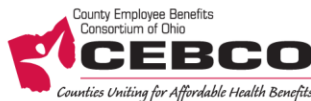
Extension also offers a program in schools to meet the state's financial literacy requirement called Real Money, Real World. The State Treasurer's office partners in this effort which includes lessons presented by classroom teachers, followed by a simulation for the students that involves community volunteers. The students are assigned a salary, number of children, etc. and then go to various stations to obtain everything they need – a place to live, a car, insurance, child care, utilities, etc. They have to balance their monthly budget with their paycheck so many have to visit these stations more than once before they find what they can afford. And the list of Extension's outreach can go on and on...

Extension is one of the counties non-mandated services, so commissioners don't have to fund it. However, in all 88 counties there is still an Extension office. Ten counties have dedicated property tax levies to generate the needed funds. All of the others (except one) are receiving dollars from the county general fund. That shows how commissioners value what Extension provides – they choose to spend their limited resources on it, as have you in the General Assembly.



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CCAO works closely with OSU Extension at the state level, as our commissioners' work with Extension in each county. It is a critical partnership, and we value the strong and flexible working relationship the two organizations have developed.

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio, to congratulate OSU Extension on their 100 year anniversary.