



## PARTNERING TO BUILD A STRONGER OHIO

SMART TAX POLICY • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • STRONGER COMMUNITIES

### SUPPORT COUNTY INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES

Ohio's counties are responsible for 60% of all the bridges and 24% of all the road miles in the state. Counties face a 60% funding deficit for roads and bridges. With 30% of Ohio's major roads in poor or mediocre condition, Ohio motorists are spending \$3.5 billion in extra vehicle repair costs. The economic impact from traffic congestion in lost hours and excess fuel consumption is shocking. A strong federal partnership to sustain our nation's infrastructure investments is critical to help promote economic development and public safety. More information about Ohio's infrastructure crisis is available at [fixourroadsOhio.com](http://fixourroadsOhio.com).

### SUPPORT CONSISTENT AND FAIR SALES TAX COLLECTION

Sales tax is a critical revenue stream for county government, often comprising 50% or more of a county's general fund revenue. Now that we have the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *South Dakota v. Wayfair*, we are hoping that Ohio can move forward to take steps to implement consistent sales tax collection instead of relying on individuals to report it. Please avoid any federal legislation that would impede Ohio's ability to implement consistent and fair sales tax collection.

### PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

We need a strong federal partner to help enhance the ability of county officials to prevent and treat mental health and substance use disorders, both in the community and within the confines of the criminal justice system. The impact that drug addiction is having on county budgets is hard to overstate. The impact on our jails and child protective systems is staggering. For example, Ohio has experienced a 28 percent increase in children in custody since 2013. The cost of foster and residential facility placements totaled almost \$370 million in 2018 – an increase of almost \$95 million in five years – and those costs are projected to increase by at least another \$44 million by 2020. Source: <http://www.pcsao.org/pdf/advocacy/2018SystemInCrisisReport.pdf>

### PARTNER ON CRITICAL WATER ISSUES

**Algal Blooms** – Ohio has been working to address water quality in response to algal blooms. More research and funding is needed. A strong federal partnership as we collaborate with industry, state and local governments as well as higher education is critical to finding a solution.

**Aging Water & Sewer Infrastructure** – Partner with us to make sure local governments and residents can afford to undertake the necessary projects associated with upgrading our aging infrastructure.

### Regulatory Reforms

#### Permit Limits

Agencies and communities are being hampered by a prescriptive approach to setting permit limits for nutrients, storm water and for TMDL-derived parameters. U.S. EPA admits that many remaining water quality issues are caused primarily by non-point sources, such as residential, agricultural and local development practices. CCAO is encouraged by the Ohio's emphasis on controlling non-point sources through the development of Nutrient Management Strategies and the work of the Ohio Lake Erie State Phosphorous Task Force. With U.S. EPA at the

table re-examining these regulations, we could better prioritize limited resource to garner the best possible outcomes.

### **Assessing Local Financial Capability**

Agencies and communities are also being hampered by a prescriptive approach to evaluation of local financial capability used by enforcement officials of the federal government. The federal regulatory framework is being applied in a way that fails to adequately consider local economic conditions and the need for effective prioritization and scheduling of significant water quality investment. This federal approach has already produced, and, if unchecked, will continue to produce unprecedented wastewater rate increases across Ohio. It will also yield significant community disruption from construction programs and, in many cases, limited incremental improvement in overall water quality. Given current economic conditions, these programs could have a devastating effect on the state's economic development goals.

### **Waters of the U.S.**

CCAO and NACo continue to believe that local streets, gutters, and human made ditches should be excluded from the definition of "Waters of the U.S." under the federal Clean Water Act.

### **ENSURE LOCAL FLEXIBILITY TO GET/KEEP PEOPLE WORKING AND TO PROTECT VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

Ohio is a state supervised/county administered human services and workforce development state. Counties administer welfare reform, child and adult protective services, child support, workforce development, Medicaid and other programs that are designed to help people attain self-sufficiency and gainful employment and to protect vulnerable populations. Please consult with counties when considering changes to these federal programs.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO OHIO. Please remember that we are here as a resource for you if you have questions about how proposed federal legislation would impact our county.**

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