

What's at Stake for our School District & Community



The Big Picture: Local Control at Risk

Property taxes are the foundation of local funding for schools, fire/EMS, police, roads, libraries, and hospitals.



Local property taxes fund the essentials that keep schools running – teachers and staff, classroom programs, buses, building upkeep, technology, and learning materials.



Local property taxes also sustain essential community services – including fire and EMS protection, law enforcement, roads and infrastructure, public health, and libraries.

Bill	Key Effect	Risk to Local Revenue
HB 186	Caps growth at the 20-mil floor	Loss of up to \$1.5 M for Mohawk Local Schools
HB 335	Caps inside (unvoted) millage growth	Restricts natural inflationary growth
HB 129	Redefines the 20-mill floor to include fixed-sum levies	More frequently on the ballot
HB 309	Allows county commissions to cut levies	Transfers power from local voters to appointed boards

There are better options!



- Targeted relief for seniors and veterans
- Full reimbursement for capped revenue
- Local control over voter-approved levies
- Predictable, transparent transition plans

Property Tax Reform in Ohio: Why It Matters to Every Community

Understanding the Impact on Schools, Safety Services, and Local Control

Mohawk Local Schools – 40% State Funded | 50% Locally Funded (35% property tax and 15% income tax)

This handout explains the proposed property tax reforms in Ohio and their potential impact on schools, local services, and communities.

The Big Picture

Property taxes are the foundation of local funding for schools, fire/EMS, police, roads, libraries, and hospitals. Eliminating or capping them removes the most stable and predictable revenue source communities rely on. While taxpayers deserve relief, reforms must not dismantle local control.

Better Approach: Targeted relief for seniors and veterans through homestead expansion, circuit breakers, and income-based relief — while maintaining stable, locally driven funding for public services.

How Property Taxes Support Our Schools

Mohawk receives 40% of funding from the state and 50% from local taxpayers (property tax and income tax). Local property taxes fund salaries, programs, transportation, maintenance, technology, and curriculum. Without stable local revenue, schools face larger class sizes, fewer electives, deferred maintenance, and staff reductions.

The Ripple Effect Across the Community

Property taxes also fund Fire/EMS, Law Enforcement, Roads & Infrastructure, and Health & Libraries. If local funding is restricted, the entire community feels the impact through slower emergency response times, reduced library hours, and deferred infrastructure maintenance.

Unfunded Mandates – The Hidden Burden

Ohio schools face state mandates without matching funding. Districts must serve all students, regardless of cost. The cost to educate a student varies based on numerous factors such as socio-economic status, special education needs, intervention and enrichment needs, specific courses requiring more specific types of equipment and other resources. This shift places pressure on local taxpayers to make up for reduced state support.

HB 186 – Property Tax Growth Cap

Status: Passed House; pending Senate.

Caps property tax growth at the 20-mill floor using inflation (GDP deflator). Applies retroactively to 2023–2024 reappraisal counties, with partial backfill funded by canceling the 2026 sales tax holiday. Does not adjust the state funding formula — creating a double loss of local and state revenue.

Local Impact: Mohawk could lose up to \$1.5 million.

Bottom Line: Caps the ability of schools and local governments to keep up with inflation.

Ask: Reinstate the funding-formula fix and guarantee full reimbursement.

HB 309 – County Budget Commission Control

Status: House-passed; Senate hearings in progress.

Allows county budget commissions to reduce voter-approved levies deemed 'unnecessary or excessive.' Applies after a 5-year protection window for new levies and allows earlier reductions for renewals.

Bottom Line: **Transfers control from local voters to county-appointed boards.**

Ask: Exempt elected boards (schools, townships, libraries) from discretionary commission reductions.

HB 129 – Redefining the 20-Mill Floor

Status: Passed House; pending Senate review.

Counts fixed-sum (emergency and substitute) levies toward the 20-mill floor and limits renewals. New fixed-sum levies are counted immediately, while older ones phase in starting 2026. Removes 10-year term flexibility and **raises ballot frequency.**

Bottom Line: Shrinks district flexibility and **raises taxpayer costs.**

Ask: Allow substitutes to renew as fixed-sum levies, remove the one-time limit, and reinstate 10-year term options.

HB 335 – Inside Millage Revenue Cap

Status: House-passed; Senate pending.

Caps inside (unvoted) millage revenue growth to inflation, excluding new construction. Restricts the natural growth that helps extend levy cycles and stabilize local budgets.

Bottom Line: Erodes flexibility and **increases taxpayer fatigue.**

Ask: Exempt essential services (schools, fire/EMS, libraries, health departments) from strict caps or provide full reimbursement.

The Bigger Trend – A Shift Away from Local Control

Together, these bills signal a legislative movement to erode local funding authority and increase state control. If unchecked, this trend could lead to the elimination of local property taxes — stripping communities of their most reliable revenue source.

What We Support

Ohio needs a strategic, long-term funding plan that:

- Provides targeted relief without blanket caps.
- Reimburses local governments and schools in full for capped revenue.
- Protects local control and voter-approved levies.
- Recognizes and funds the true cost of state mandates.

Myth vs. Fact

Myth: Property tax reform only affects schools.

Fact: It impacts schools and essential services like fire, EMS, roads, libraries, and health departments.

Myth: The state will replace lost local revenue.

Fact: There is no permanent replacement plan. Backfills are temporary.

Myth: Schools can simply cut waste.

Fact: Most operate near the 20-mill floor with lean budgets; cuts directly impact classrooms.

Myth: Property tax growth is unchecked.

Fact: HB 920 already limits growth by freezing voted millage rates.

Myth: Schools control property tax assessments.

Fact: Valuations are determined by county auditors and the state, not schools.

Key Takeaway

Strong Schools = Strong Communities.

Property taxes aren't just numbers—they're the foundation of safe neighborhoods, quality education, reliable emergency services, and thriving local economies.

Protecting local funding protects Ohio's future.