



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

June 23, 2025

Dear Members of the Ohio General Assembly,

On behalf of Ohio's emergency management professionals, we are writing to express our deep concern regarding the potential consequences of proposed property tax reforms, including provisions outlined in Sub. H.B. 335. While we appreciate the General Assembly's intent to modernize Ohio's tax system, we urge you to consider the significant—and in many cases, severe—impacts these changes could have on emergency management and disaster preparedness across our state.

Many Ohio counties and local jurisdictions rely on inside millage and voter-approved property tax levies as foundational funding sources to support emergency management agencies. These funds are essential for maintaining operations, hiring and retaining staff, supporting planning and training, sustaining local warning systems, coordinating multi-agency responses, and ensuring readiness for natural disasters, hazardous material incidents, and other public emergencies.

Sub. H.B. 335 proposes the elimination or reduction of access to inside millage beginning in 2026. Without this dedicated revenue, emergency management agencies may be forced to:

- Reduce staffing and cut coordination capacity during emergencies,
- Delay critical planning efforts and regional exercises,
- Scale back public warning and alert systems,
- Eliminate outreach, education, and preparedness initiatives, and
- Jeopardize grant match capabilities, making it harder to access federal disaster preparedness funding.

This is not a speculative concern—it represents a direct threat to Ohio's readiness and resilience in the face of growing risks, including severe weather, cyberattacks, and infrastructure failures.

Thank you for your public service and your continued support for Ohio's safety and resilience. We look forward to working collaboratively to ensure that public safety is not compromised in the process of tax reform.

Sincerely,

Sarah McNamee, Director
EMAO President