



OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Courtney Combs, Chair
House Transportation, Public Safety & Homeland Security Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 S. High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: HB 40 Turnpike Commission

Dear Chairman Combs:

On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), I would like to offer our support for House Bill 40, which makes the Ohio Turnpike Commission responsible for major maintenance of turnpike projects located in counties and townships. The OTA has supported this legislation in the past, as we were proponents of HB 168 (127th GA) and HB 131 (128th GA).

The OTA firmly believes that the structure and maintenance of bridges and roads over the Ohio Turnpike are the responsibility of the Ohio Turnpike Commission, not of the townships and counties in which they are located. Due to poor maintenance by the Commission, several township roads have been closed because the economically strained townships cannot afford to rebuild the grade separators. The closure of these roads has severely impacted local traffic patterns and has caused tension to escalate between local governments and the Turnpike Commission over the maintenance of these roads. House Bill 40 will clearly establish the Turnpike Commission's responsibility to maintain the approaches, slopes, overpasses, and embankments built to accommodate the Ohio Turnpike.

For example, Riley Township (Sandusky County) has six turnpike overpasses. In 2007, three of those overpasses needed slope repair at a cost of \$200,000 each. The 2007 annual township budget was only \$280,000 and the annual road budget was only \$90,000. The financial situation in Riley Township has not changed much since 2007 and thus the township is not able to repair the Turnpike overpass slopes and maintain the forty-four miles of road they are, by statute, required to maintain.

The Ohio Township Association strongly supports HB 40 and we look forward to working with the sponsor to pass the measure in the 129th General Assembly. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this or any other township-related legislation, please do not hesitate to contact me at (614) 863-0045 or by e-mail at fought@ohiotownships.org.

Sincerely,

Heidi M. Fought
Director of Governmental Affairs

cc: Committee members
Sponsor Damschroder

