



# County Auditors' Association of Ohio

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## Ohio's Auditors are Here to Help

Property owners across Ohio are feeling the pain with record high property tax bills and are looking for help to ease their burden. Ohio's County Auditors are often blamed for higher property taxes from increased property values and voter approved levies. In the journey for tax relief, County Auditors are actually the property owners' best friend and are here to help the Ohio Legislature pass meaningful policy reform.

A County Auditor's duties are specifically outlined in Ohio statute – meaning we can only perform the duties the Ohio Legislature has given us the ability and permission to perform. Three-year property value update cycles, less and less meaningful homestead and owner occupancy savings for seniors and property owners, CAUV values, and inside millage with school 20 mill floor revenue guarantees are all changes to state law that have had a direct impact on taxpayers.

The County Auditor does not set tax rates; instead our role is to fairly and equitably value property. We apply the exemptions, credits, abatements, and tax rates that are approved by the Ohio Legislature and the voters. County Auditors have been warning legislators for years that funding decisions being made at the state level are increasing the local property tax burden which pay for essential services that impact the day to day life of our citizens.

Ohio local governments were previously supported by a wide variety of tax dollars through state revenue. The Tangible Personal Property tax was abolished without filling those dollars at the local level meaning levies made up the difference. The Local Government Fund, which was a portion of the State General Fund used heavily by townships and others, has been reduced in excess of 50% meaning levies make up the difference.

The list could go on and on, however the point is simple. Ohio property owners now have a much higher portion of the financial burden to pave our roads, fund our police, teach our kids, and provide the services you need. Voters have approved levy after levy to keep services going, and now, with a record-breaking real estate market, the consequences of these actions have created a perfect storm for taxpayers. This is not to mention the growing number of exemptions, abatements, and state approved discounts for property taxpayers which lead to higher rates for other properties.

County Auditors have ideas and policy reforms to help address the strong need for changes to the property tax system in Ohio. We now have been given a seat at the table and are grateful for the opportunity to work with state leaders to make a big difference for our property owners.

Sarah Thorne  
Knox County Auditor