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**Ohio House Local Government Committee
Opponent Testimony – House Bill 137
Brock Hutchison, Library Director
October 15, 2025**

Chair King, Vice Chair Kishman, Ranking Member Sims and members of the House Local Government Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony to House Bill 137. Currently, Library districts follow a statutory process as defined by ORC 5705.03 and 5705.23. The process is summarized below:

1. The Board of the Library trustees must pass a resolution, requesting the County Auditor to certify the current assessed valuation of the district and the amount to be generated during the first year of collection.
2. The County Auditor certifies the amount to be generated and provides a Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue.
3. The Board of Library trustees must pass a second resolution, requesting the school district (in our case) to submit the levy to the voters.
4. The School District or Taxing Authority **shall** submit the resolution to the Board of Elections.

All of the above actions by the Library Board of Trustees and School District are done in public meetings and in accordance with Ohio Sunshine Law.

HB 137 changes the word ***shall*** to ***may***.

I've outlined this process to show there is already a legal framework established for placing levy requests on the ballot for Library Districts, which gives taxpayers at least three opportunities to attend a public meeting and voice their concerns.

I believe wholeheartedly in the voters' right to choose. HB 137 provides the opportunity to deny ballot access to officials that could have a conflict of interest, such as their own organization seeking a levy during the same election cycle.

Ohioans have overwhelmingly elected to support their public libraries – passing 92% of public library levies over the last 15 years. HB 137 has the potential to take this right away from voters.

I urge you to keep Ohio a local control state and allow the voters to make their own decisions.

Thank you,