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Superintendent

THE NEED DOESN'T GO AWAY, WHEN THE FUNDING DOES.

Property taxes can be a difficult subject. For homeowners, particularly older adults and others living on fixed incomes, the cost of a property-tax bill can be a real concern. As property values rise, many Ohioans are asking whether there are better ways to provide meaningful tax relief.

Those concerns deserve to be heard. At the same time, it is important to understand what property taxes currently help pay for, and what could happen if that source of local funding disappeared.

In Fairfield County, countywide property-tax levies currently generate an estimated \$55.8 million each year for services including senior services, developmental disabilities, mental health and addiction services, child and adult protective services, road improvement and county general operations. Property taxes also support schools, libraries, municipalities, townships, and other local services throughout the county.

The money would have to come from somewhere.

Eliminating property taxes would eliminate a major source of local revenue, but it would not eliminate the need for the services that revenue supports. Schools would still need teachers. Seniors would still need services. Roads would still need maintenance. First responders would still need to answer calls. People with disabilities and vulnerable children and adults would still need support.

That means communities would have to make difficult choices. Without replacement funding, local governments and schools could have to reduce services, delay projects, cut programs or look for other sources of revenue. The key question is not whether these services cost money. It is how communities would replace the funding that currently helps pay for them.

Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Fairfield DD) receives about \$18.7 million from countywide property-tax levies. Without that funding, we would have to reduce services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

That would mean less support for the 1,703 individuals and families connected with Fairfield DD.

Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Our mission is to bring about a vibrant community where people lead lives of greater independence and make meaningful contributions.

What would it mean for Fairfield DD?

For Fairfield DD, property-tax funding helps make many programs available, including Early Intervention for children and families. If property-tax revenue were eliminated, we would need to consider changes such as reductions in staff, fewer therapies, and supporting less families.

For the people we serve, these are not abstract budget numbers. They are programs, services, and supports that have a direct impact on daily life in our community.

Property-tax relief and property-tax elimination are not the same thing.

Ohio lawmakers are considering ways to provide property-tax relief while maintaining a system that continues to support local services. One current example is House Joint Resolution 10 (HJR 10), introduced on September 8, 2026, by State Reps. Jeff LaRe and Kevin Miller.

HJR 10 proposes a constitutional amendment that would limit how much of an increase in an owner-occupied home's appraised value could become taxable. Under the proposal, the taxable increase would be limited to inflation, capped at 3% annually, while the homeowner or the homeowner's spouse continues to own the property. If approved by three-fifths of both chambers of the General Assembly, the amendment could go before voters in May 2027; if voters approve it, the proposed protections would begin January 1, 2028.

HJR 10 is a proposal, not current law. It is one example of the broader discussion taking place in Ohio about how to address rising property-tax burdens while considering the funding needs of local communities.

Finding a balance

Property-tax affordability is a real concern, and homeowners deserve relief when rising tax bills become difficult to manage. At the same time, any change to property taxes has to account for the services those dollars currently help fund.

Fairfield DD is committed to keeping our community informed about this issue and what it could mean for the people with developmental disabilities and their families in Fairfield County. We believe residents deserve clear information about both the challenges of property taxes and the services those dollars help make possible.

Learn more about Fairfield DD at www.fairfielddd.com.

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