

**League of Women Voters
Of Licking County**

Voters' Guide Fall 2018

**Election Day: November 6, 2018
Early Voting Begins: October 10, 2018**



Ohio Senate 31st District

Responsibilities of a state legislator: To represent the people of the district and the State of Ohio in making laws which deal with matters not assigned to the federal government.

Term of office for Ohio State Senator: 4 years.

Biographical Info:

Name: Jay Hottinger

Party: Republican

Mailing Address: 894 Jonathan Ln Newark, OH 43055.



Current job: State Senator, 31st district; Vice-President of Sales Truck One Inc - a local small business. **Education:** 1988 Newark HS graduate; 1992 Capital Univ. graduate; B.A. Public Administration & Political Science, Summa Cum Laude. **Work experience/qualifications:** Newark City Council; State Rep & State Senator; Jay Company office mgr 1991-1994; V-P Sales of Truck One, Inc 1999-present.

Q: What is the most important issue facing the people in your district and how do you plan to address it?

The 2 most important are closely linked: better workforce development to prepare individuals for employment & for success in the workforce & the opiate crisis which has tremendous negative consequences & impact across all aspects of society. There are 178,000 unfilled job vacancies in Ohio nearly half of which pay \$50K or more. Unfortunately, too many lack either the education or skills necessary to fill those jobs. A few yrs ago there were 13 state agencies & 77 different programs in OH working on workforce development & not enough coordination in tasks or efforts between them. The process needs to be better streamlined & all entities (education, business, Jobs & Family Services, econ dev. leaders & public & private sector workforce leaders) need to work to remove barriers to employment so that all individuals have the training, education & skills set for employment. Opiate crisis 2nd leading problem in OH. I introduced bills to slow the pipeline of addiction & life saving treatment.

Q: What are the best ways the State can help ensure that Ohioans of all economic backgrounds have access to affordable health care?

The best way is to help remove barriers to employment so that individuals can find jobs with good benefits including healthcare. For example, there is a company in my senate district in Perry County that is trying unsuccessfully to fill job vacancies. The starting pay is \$19 an hr. and an insurance plan that is \$5 a week for a 90% - 10% plan. (Employer pays 90% of healthcare costs; employee pays 10%.) Removing barriers to successful employment so people can find good paying jobs with benefits and healthcare is the best option. Also 4 years ago the State of Ohio expanded access to Medicaid through expansion made available via The Affordable Care Act - while that expansion has put great strains on state budget (Medicaid has now surpassed Education as #1 expenditure in Ohio) the expansion has seen a number of positive effects and preserving & protecting those additionally served individuals is now

Biographical Info:

Name: Melinda Miller

Party: Dem

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Current job: Mom, community activist, school volunteer, small business owner/manager, homemaker. **Education:** Ohio public school graduate summa cum laude; B.A. American University cum laude; AOS Culinary Arts Culinary Institute of America. **Work experience/qualifications:** I spent 20 years working hard in the service industry: serving, cooking, managing, and teaching. I learned to listen and use my voice, to innovate, lead, and collaborate. Those years instilled in me a deep value for the efforts of labor. I foster collaboration, transparency, respect, and goodwill.

Q: What is the most important issue facing the people in your district and how do you plan to address it?

Too many people in Senate District 31 cannot get the resources they need to make ends meet. For example, almost 50% of students in this district qualify for free or reduced meals. The problem is not unemployment; the problem is low wages and a tax system that unfairly burdens low- and middle-income families. I will work to raise the minimum wage to \$15.00. I will oppose legislation that undermines the abilities of workers to organize and collectively bargain as unions. I will support legislation that lowers sales taxes and raises income taxes on the wealthiest. Right now, the bottom 20% of income earners pay 12% of their income in taxes, while the wealthiest 1% pay 6% of their income in taxes. That tax system is backwards, and it is a result of Republican-led tax cuts on the wealthiest people since 2005.

Q: What are the best ways the State can help ensure that Ohioans of all economic backgrounds have access to affordable health care?

Ohio must maintain the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. 90% of the funding for that expansion comes from the federal government. If we get rid of the expansion, 700,000 Ohioans will lose healthcare and the state will lose those federal dollars. The state needs to ensure that healthcare providers-- doctors, hospitals, etc.-- will accept the insurance that people have. Too often, people who have insurance can't find providers that will accept it. This is especially a problem in rural communities. We must treat the addiction crisis in Ohio as the public health crisis that it is by emphasizing treatment over incarceration. The state needs to develop a comprehensive response to the crisis that includes Prevention, Harm Reduction, Treatment, and Recovery. While it is difficult to enact a universal healthcare system in the state, the state legislature should take a leadership role in urging the

essential.

Q: *What, if any, restrictions would you support on the purchase and/or ownership of firearms? Examples: universal background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka red flag laws), limits on magazine2 capacity?*

Ensuring that criminals, individuals with ill intent, domestic violence offenders and those suffering from mental illness do not have access to firearms is very important. I am open to any ideas, suggestions or proposals that help prevent such individuals from ownership or possession of firearms. Finding ways to prevent or limit access to criminals while not punishing law abiding citizens and their right to ownership is something that is common sense and most should be able to support. State firearm restrictions should mirror federal gun restrictions so that state & local law enforcement can help enforce & bring charges for violations as opposed to only US Marshalls is a good starting point. Red Flag laws are relatively new and not implemented in very many states yet so their effectiveness is yet to be determined but I support their intent – restricting gun ownership to extreme risk individuals while not suppressing an individual's right to due process makes a great deal of sense.

Q: *What degree of importance do you place on repairing, replacing, or upgrading Ohio's infrastructure, including energy infrastructure? Explain your plans or priorities for spending on infrastructure.*

Ohio & our local communities: counties, townships, villages & cities have an aging infrastructure & building & rebuilding it is crucial. My longstanding support of funding transportation budget & infrastructure needs in capital improvement budgets has garnered me the support & endorsement from all of the construction trades including the Operating Engineers, the Central Ohio Building Trades & all of their affiliates & the Ohio Assn. of Construction Trades & all their affiliate unions. I have supported & continue to support proposals that put additional resources back in local communities specifically for road, bridge, water/ wastewater & other infrastructure improvements. Regarding State of Ohio infrastructure needs I supported the bonding of the Ohio Turnpike which generated over \$2 billion in revenue for improvements & in the past I have supported an increase in gas tax to generate revenue to build and maintain our highways & infrastructure. Additional revenues are needed now.

Q: *How would you implement a constitutionally compliant school funding system?*

In 2016 I was awarded the very first "Champion of Public Education" by the Ohio School Board Assn. My wife & I & our 3 daughters are products of public schools & as someone who has chaired numerous Newark City Schools bond & levy issues I care deeply about both the quality of public education & its funding. State funding for K-12 has increased 110.1% between 1998 the year the SC ruled OH's system unconstitutional to today. Inflation as measured by CPI was 52.5% over that period. Funding has more than doubled since DeRolph decision from \$5.087 Billion to \$10.865 Billion. In addition to these dollars, Ohio now is #1 in the nation in funding school construction funding. In 2002 the Supreme Court vacated the DeRolph III opinion & they did not retain jurisdiction or remand the case to a lower court. Following that ruling, OH has continued to enact legislation that has further reformed school funding, standards, curriculum & accountability. K-12 funding remains a top priority for me.

country toward a universal healthcare system.

Q: *What, if any, restrictions would you support on the purchase and/or ownership of firearms? Examples: universal background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka red flag laws), limits on magazine2 capacity?*

I believe we can protect the 2nd Amendment while passing common-sense legislation that will decrease deaths by gun violence. This includes funding gun violence prevention research, requiring criminal background checks on all gun sales, closing the loophole on unlicensed gun sales, prohibiting bump stocks that allow people to transform semi-automatic weapons into fully-automatic weapons, and keeping guns out of schools. I also support "Red Flag" laws that allow law enforcement to get a court order to temporarily confiscate a person's guns if they have threatened themselves or others. My opponent has sponsored legislation to create "Stand Your Ground" laws in Ohio. I oppose this legislation. At the very least, we should not be passing laws that have led to increased homicide rates in other states.

Q: *What degree of importance do you place on repairing, replacing, or upgrading Ohio's infrastructure, including energy infrastructure? Explain your plans or priorities for spending on infrastructure.*

The state has taken tax dollars from local communities to fill in budget gaps caused by tax cuts to the wealthiest Ohioans. The state needs to return those tax dollars to local communities, so they can be used to fund local infrastructure needs. The needs of local communities in district 31 will shape my priorities for infrastructure spending at the state level. I will support legislation that incentivizes renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, and creates jobs in an emerging green economy. I will support legislation to raise the severance tax on oil and gas, and use the proceeds from the tax to help Ohio transition from a carbon-based economy to one based on renewable energy. I will also advocate for improved mass transit to get people where they need to go while reducing emissions and improving our air quality

Q: *How would you implement a constitutionally compliant school funding system?*

The unconstitutional funding system in Ohio has led to a general decline in Ohio's educational system. Our national ranking has fallen from 5th to 22nd in the last 8 years, and we are ranked 49th for graduation rate discrepancies between white and black students. Ohio must create a more equitable funding system. Right now, the system relies too heavily on municipal property and income taxes, so wealthier communities have more resources for schools than less wealthy communities. The state needs a more centralized funding system that guarantees equal funding for each student in each district. I believe that every child deserves access to an excellent public education regardless of income or location. I also believe that public funding should stay in public schools, not be diverted to privately owned and often for-profit charter schools which, as we have seen with the ECOT scandal, take tax-payer dollars with little to no accountability.

Ohio House District 71

Responsibilities of a state legislator: To represent the people of the district and the State of Ohio in making laws which deal with matters not assigned to the federal government.

Term of office for Ohio Representatives: 2 years.

Biographical Info:

Name: Jeremy Blake

Party: Dem

Mailing Address: 71 Gainor Ave Newark, OH 43055.

Campaign Phone: (740) 404-4881.

Website: <http://jeremyblakeforohio.com/>. **Campaign Email:** jeremyblakeforohio@gmail.com.



Current job: Desktop Support Specialist at Denison University. **Education:** Newark High School Graduate 1996; Denison University, B.A. in Economics 2012. **Work experience/qualifications:** Current member of Newark City Council representing the 2nd Ward; Former president and member of the Newark

City School Board; Founding member of both the South Newark Civic Association and the Young Leaders of Licking County; Ohio Senate staff member 1996-2006.

Q: *What is the most important issue facing the people in your district and how do you plan to address it?*

One of the most important issues facing the people of Licking County is the ability to earn higher wages. Our community is blessed to have a diverse local economy which has allowed us to have a low unemployment rate however, too many families remain in poverty. People are working but not earning enough to be able to fully achieve the American dream. To address this I would support state and local partnerships to expand career opportunities in nursing, counseling, public safety and teaching. Additionally, I will partner with local training centers to remove barriers to employment for individuals and develop the necessary relationships for a better transportation system in Licking County.

Q: *What are the best ways the State can help ensure that Ohioans of all economic backgrounds have access to affordable health care?*

The expansion of Medicaid in Ohio was a positive decision to insure more Ohioans are receiving proper care. This has had positive benefits for behavioral healthcare as well as physical healthcare. Historically, health insurance has been an employer provided benefit. I am in agreement with efforts for more people to gain access through government sponsored healthcare programs. Both employer provided health insurance and government sponsored health insurance need to provide better transparency with regards to the patient's costs associated with prescriptions, procedures and services.

Q: *What, if any, restrictions would you support on the purchase and/or ownership of firearms? Examples: universal background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka red flag laws), limits on magazine capacity?*

Biographical Info:

Name: Scott Ryan

Party: Rep

Mailing Address: 3216 Sharon Valley Rd Newark, Ohio 43055.

Campaign Phone: (740) 258-3522. **Website:**

<http://www.VoteScottRyan.com>. **Campaign Email:** Scott@VoteScottRyan.com.



Current job: State Representative - 71st District; Agent - Shai Commercial Real Estate. **Education:** Miami University, 1987 Graduate, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration; Granville High School, 1983 Cum Laude Graduate. **Work experience/qualifications:** 1987 - 2010, Newark Leader Printing Co.; 2011 - 2014, Licking County Treasurer; 2015 - present, Agent at Shai Commercial Real Estate; 2015 - present; State Representative - 71st District.

Q: *What is the most important issue facing the people in your district and how do you plan to address it?*

When talking to constituents and colleagues from around the state, the issue that arises most often is the importance of continually growing our state's economy, increasing wages and strengthening workforce development in order to prepare Ohioans for the demands of the 21st century economy.

Q: *What are the best ways the State can help ensure that Ohioans of all economic backgrounds have access to affordable health care?*

Like with so many issues, I think the most important mission for an elected official is to promote policies that make it easier for Ohioans to find employment and for businesses to create jobs. This not only makes it possible for people to make an independent living, but also expands their options for health insurance and finding care. Additionally, anything we can do to increase the number of services and choices for healthcare will help to both increase transparency and decrease the costs of receiving quality care.

Q: *What, if any, restrictions would you support on the purchase and/or ownership of firearms? Examples: universal background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka red flag laws), limits on magazine capacity?*

I am in favor of the common sense gun control proposals submitted to the General Assembly by Governor John Kasich. These items included background checks, a "red flag" law which allows police to take a person's weapons if a court decides he or she poses a threat, a ban on bump stocks, a prohibition on armor-piercing bullets and a law that states that a person convicted of domestic violence or who is subject to a protection order should automatically lose the right to buy or own a gun. Along with Governor Kasich, I oppose "stand your ground" legislation for Ohio.

Q: *What degree of importance do you place on repairing, replacing, or upgrading Ohio's infrastructure, including energy infrastructure? Explain your plans or priorities for spending on infrastructure.*

I would re-establish a working partnership between the Statehouse and local governments with a focus on improving neighborhoods. Many of our major highways and roadways receive regular attention but we must work with local jurisdictions to take care of the neighborhood streets, some of which have not had improvements in decades. Improving infrastructure in neighborhoods will help spur investment in community development. Additionally, I would work with local governments to identify needs to improve aging water and wastewater treatment plants. In Newark, we installed a solar array to assist with energy costs of the operations at our wastewater treatment plant. This is an example of the creative thinking that can be done to incorporate green energy options. Finally, state government should be a partner with assisting local police and fire departments to ensure that they have the facilities and equipment they need to serve their communities.

Q: *How would you implement a constitutionally compliant school funding system?*

I believe in the DeRolph decisions by the Ohio Supreme Court that Ohio has a constitutional responsibility for a thorough and efficient system of public education. Every child in Ohio, regardless of their zip code, deserves a quality education. In Licking County, we have students still learning in temporary facilities. That is unacceptable. I served on the Newark School Board and advocated for the Legislature to fulfill its duty then. Sadly, not much has changed. There is still an over reliance on the local taxpayer. Public education must be a priority as well as universal preschool and literacy programs. To help fund this in the state budget, I am against state dollars going to for profit charter schools such as ECOT. The decision to properly fund public school systems needs to be made in the halls of the Statehouse and not at the local ballot box. Superintendents, principals and teachers need to focus on educating children and supporting families, not on running local campaigns.

Keeping Ohioans safe from crime is certainly a priority, and we must be cognizant, compassionate, and communicative with each other within our communities to help achieve that goal. I believe in protecting Ohioans' Second Amendment rights. I would advocate first focusing on strengthening compliance to already-existing laws before enacting new ones. The unfortunate actions of some are already in direct violation of current law. We must also collectively help individuals suffering from mental health challenges receive the care and support they need.

Q: *What degree of importance do you place on repairing, replacing, or upgrading Ohio's infrastructure, including energy infrastructure? Explain your plans or priorities for spending on infrastructure.*

Improving the state's infrastructure is always a priority in the legislature and is an issue that deserves constant attention. As part of that goal, I co-authored legislation which has overwhelmingly passed the House that would allocate 50% of the state's surplus funds to local governments for the purpose of road improvements and infrastructure needs. I will continue to be a strong voice for assisting local partners in improving our infrastructure.

Q: *How would you implement a constitutionally compliant school funding system?*

While school funding is a very complicated issue, I am proud to have been part of recent, significant progress made during a nine-month nonpartisan working group that included several elected members of the Ohio House and more than 70 educational experts from around our state - including Newark Schools Superintendent Doug Ute and Granville Treasurer Mike Sobul. It is critical to have taken the time for this comprehensive deep dive, and to have those with working knowledge of actual needs provide leading roles and seemingly countless hours in the formation of solutions.

Ohio House District 72

Responsibilities of a state legislator: To represent the people of the district and the State of Ohio in making laws which deal with matters not assigned to the federal government.

Term of office for Ohio Representatives: 2 years.

Biographical Info:

Name: Larry Householder

Party: Republican

Mailing Address: 3825 Township Rd 19 NW, Glenford, OH 43739

Website: <http://larryhouseholder.com>

Candidate did not respond.

Biographical Info:

Name: Tyler Shipley

Party: Democratic

Mailing Address: 4135 Walnut Rd, Lot 185, Buckeye Lake, OH 43008; **Campaign Phone:** (740) 644-9825; **Campaign**

Email: shipleysforohio@gmail.com.



Current job: Retail worker; **Education:** Associates in Arts and Sciences from OSU; **Work experience/qualifications:** History Major and Political Science Minor.

Q: *What is the most important issue facing the people in your district and how do you plan to address it?*

The most important issues in my district are the corruption in the State House, the crumbling infrastructure in the area, and the drug epidemic. I plan on addressing these issues through anti corruption legislation, creating a jobs program to fix our crumbling infrastructure, and helping ensure our communities are properly funded to properly address the drug epidemic.

Q: *What are the best ways the State can help ensure that Ohioans of all economic backgrounds have access to affordable health care?*

The best that we can do is help establish a universal healthcare system in the state or at the very least a public option so that the insurance companies have to lower their prices to compete.

Q: *What, if any, restrictions would you support on the purchase and/or ownership of firearms? Examples: universal background checks, Extreme Risk Protection Orders (aka red flag laws), limits on magazine capacity?*

Candidate did not respond.

Q: *What degree of importance do you place on repairing, replacing, or upgrading Ohio's infrastructure, including energy infrastructure? Explain your plan or priorities for spending on infrastructure.*

I want the State to fund a giant infrastructure program to fix existing infrastructure and to build new infrastructure.

Q: *How would you implement a constitutionally compliant school funding system?*

I want to ensure that schools are funded based on need and not based on where they are.

Licking County Commissioner

Responsibilities: To exercise financial control of County expenditures; to authorize public works; to purchase land and buildings; to let contracts; to plan and administer welfare. The Board of County Commissioners also appoints other officials to operate various departments.

Term of office: 4 years.

Biographical Info:

Name: Rick Black

Party: Rep

Mailing Address: 6884 Canyon Rd SE, Hebron, OH 43025;

Campaign Phone: (740) 928-4419; **Website:**

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rick@voterickblack.com.



Current job: Fifth-generation family farmer; Church Organist/Music Director; County Commissioner;

Education: Graduate of Lakewood High School and The Ohio State University, College of Agriculture;

Work experience/qualifications: Small business owner/operator 43 yrs; Church Organist/Music Director 42 yrs; Lakewood

School Board 7 yrs; Alternate to LC Transit Board 2007-16; Union Twp. Trustee 5 yrs; County Commissioner 2015-present, currently VP of the Board.

Q: *What is the most important issue facing Licking County and how should the Commissioners address it?*

Managing and Balancing the budget is the main responsibility of Ohio's County Commissioners. The Licking County Commissioners annually review all budget requests and conduct numerous meetings with Department Heads, and Elected Officials regarding their needs. We will continue to make, sometimes tough and unpopular decisions, in every area of the County budget. The Commissioners have worked diligently to maintain and improve our financial ratings. This enables Licking County to finance many Capital Improvements completed in recent years at a very reasonable cost to our residents.

Q: *What are your best ideas for improving transportation, including public transportation, in Licking County?*

The Licking County Transit Board is preparing to enter a 5-year, Transportation Development Plan. When the plan is completed, the Board will have a better idea of the transportation needs of the public as well as the needs of businesses, education, medical and health providers. The plan will provide financial information that will show what the community can afford based on current revenues and, if there are other transit needs, the amount of money required to meet those needs.

Biographical Info:

Name: Adam Rhodes

Party: Dem

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Campaign Email: adam@rhodes2018.com



Current job: Co-founder Homestead Beer Co.

Education: English Degree from Oberlin College

Work experience/qualifications:

Software developer for nearly 10 years; Started Homestead Beer Company 5 years ago and helped it become the largest production microbrewery in Licking County.

Q: *What is the most important issue facing Licking County and how should the Commissioners address it?*

The most important issue facing Licking County is our county finances. Our financial picture has rapidly deteriorated in the last 4 years and the most recent Five Year Projection prepared by the Licking County Commissioners shows that the county will be nearly bankrupt by 2022. As a county we need to come together to figure out how to close the shortfall by closely examining every area of spending. Our efforts should focus on cutting spending on capital improvements rather than payroll – as a government we need employees to deliver effective services. We also need to reexamine our delivery of services to find ways to deliver better service more effectively. An example is Indigent Defense - by creating a Public Defender's office rather than relying on appointed counsel we can achieve better outcomes for less money.

Q: *What are your best ideas for improving transportation, including public transportation, in Licking County?*

We currently contract out our transit services to a private company - this means that money that could go towards providing better service is instead creating profits for a private enterprise. Licking County faces a difficult set of challenges on public transportation. As a rural county we require a transit systems that can accommodate every citizen in the third largest county in the state – this means a costly form of on demand transit is required. But our urban citizens in places like Newark and Pataskala can be partly served by a fixed route system of buses. In neighboring Fairfield County, they have shown that fixed route systems can reach more people with a better service for less money. Our county government should be providing these services so that every dollar is spent on

Q: Do you agree or disagree that the County should offer tax abatements to private corporations in exchange for siting or expanding business in Licking County? If you agree that the County should offer abatements, what limits and enforcement mechanisms do you support for this process?

The Ohio Legislature has authorized local Municipalities and Townships to use a variety of revenue enhancing tools to offset abated tax revenue. Having Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDD), TIF (Tax Increment Finance), Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), and other tools in place can provide revenues to the local Schools, Fire & EMS service providers, and Local and County governments. Etna Township and Pataskala have been successful utilizing these economic development tools.

Q: Would you support or oppose reducing services and infrastructure maintenance to make ends meet? Explain your answer about reducing services and infrastructure maintenance.

Past reduction in infrastructure maintenance required the Commissioners to create the "Five-Year Bridge Replacement Program" begun in 2014. The Commissioners must continue the daunting task of repairs and maintenance of Licking County properties and not let them slide into a state of disrepair again. All methods to finance these projects must be explored to maintain necessary services and keep the infrastructure intact. A safe and strong infrastructure is key to the growth of local business and industry.

Q: Would you support or oppose raising taxes to make ends meet? Explain your answer about raising taxes.

I believe the citizens of Licking County understand there are times we must dig down and pay for certain services. They proved this with passage in 2017 of a new Children Services Levy. No one likes paying taxes, but most realize there is a price tag for all services that government provides. If the need is real, I will have no problem sending an issue to the ballot. I believe I was elected by the people of Licking County to lead.

services for our citizens - outsourcing critical government functions to a for-profit company doesn't work in every circumstance and our transit system is a clear example.

Q: Do you agree or disagree that the County should offer tax abatements to private corporations in exchange for siting or expanding business in Licking County? If you agree that the County should offer abatements, what limits and enforcement mechanisms do you support for this process?

I believe that by tying abatements to corporate citizenship we can create an environment where more Licking County residents can build successful lives. The state gives our Economic Development Council wide authority to create abatements tied to certain requirements. For instance, we can require that a given percentage of jobs go to Licking County residents or that certain wage levels are maintained or that the company partner with local non-profits at certain percentages of revenue. Abatements play a very important role in creating a vibrant, successful economic life in the county – but it is time for us to transition to a new view. We need to provide abatements to get better jobs, not simply more jobs.

Q: Would you support or oppose reducing services and infrastructure maintenance to make ends meet? Explain your answer about reducing services and infrastructure maintenance.

I would oppose reducing services but will remain open-minded about infrastructure maintenance. As State and Federal legislatures have taken more money away from local governments we have relied on local citizens to step in and take on the burden. As a county, though, we have reached the limits of what we can manage. Our fiscal outlook has considerably degraded, and our bond payments are now close to 8% of total revenue – a level that is considered well beyond critical by the State Auditor. Our ability to borrow money is limited and should be conserved for future needs. While infrastructure isn't the first place to look while we try to

close our budget hole, it should be considered and examined in order to protect the services that are critical to our citizens.

Q: Would you support or oppose raising taxes to make ends meet? Explain your answer about raising taxes.

I would oppose raising local taxes to make ends meet – mainly because as a County Commissioner we can't raise taxes. The only taxes Commissioners have control over are: Sales and Use, Real Estate transfer, Motor Vehicle Registration and Utility Service. Our current Sales tax is the highest allowed by statute and therefore isn't a source of additional funds. As a county we need to talk to our State and Federal legislators to attempt to restore funding to our local governments that has been sharply reduced in the past decade.

ISSUE 1

To Reduce Penalties for Crimes of Obtaining, Possessing, and Using Illegal Drugs

Proposed Constitutional Amendment

Proposed by Initiative Petition

To add a new Section 12 to Article XV of the Constitution of the State of Ohio

A majority yes vote is necessary for the amendment to pass.

LEAGUE EXPLANATION OF ISSUE 1

Issue 1, also known as The Amendment to Reduce Penalties for Crimes of Obtaining, Possessing, and Using Illegal Drugs, would add a new section 12 to Article XV of the Ohio Constitution. The amendment is designed to reduce the number of people in state prisons for low-level, nonviolent drug possession; drug use offenses; or for non-criminal probation violations. In addition, it would provide sentence credits for participation in rehabilitative programs; and is intended to direct the savings achieved by such reductions in incarceration to substance abuse treatment programs, crime victim programs, probation programs, graduated responses programs, and rehabilitation programs.

The amendment would:

- Reclassify drug offenses from felony to misdemeanor for both accused and convicted drug users.
- Require the state to spend savings due to a reduction of the number of prison inmates on drug treatment and rehabilitation programs.

PROS ACCORDING TO PROPONENTS:

1. It would make the possession, obtainment and use of drugs no more than a misdemeanor.
2. It would create a sentence reduction credits program for inmates' participation in rehabilitative, work, or educational programs
3. It would reduce the number of people in state prisons for low-level crimes
4. It would save tens of millions of dollars annually in prison spending and direct the savings to addiction treatment and victims of crime.

CONS ACCORDING TO OPPONENTS:

1. The amendment would make it more difficult to prosecute drug traffickers.
2. This belongs in the Ohio Revised code. The constitution should contain fundamental principles and organization of government. Appropriation directives should not be added to the constitution.
3. This takes away available resources from the court for rehabilitating people and doesn't give judges the ability to use incarceration when it's necessary.
4. This proposed constitutional amendment does not provide adequate funding for treatment infrastructure nor treatment itself.

Learn to use Vote411.org

The information in this guide derives from Vote411.org, where you can find a complete guide to the races that will appear on your ballot, including state-level races and Congressional District 12.

Here are the steps to follow:

- <http://Vote411.org>
- Enter your residential address and click Enter
- Click Get Personalized Information
- Click Go to my Races



This voters' guide was made possible through the generosity of:

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Laura Joseph

Maija Bamford and Lee Beall

Jacque Morgan

Lyn Boone

Charles O'Keefe

Cathy Dollard Burzak

Susan Richardson

Ellen Clark

Mary Jo Seiple

Karin Dahl

Liz Weiser

Laura and Tom Evans