

Ohio voters could vote to eliminate property taxes if issue makes ballot

By Haley BeMiller and Cole Behrens
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Ohio homeowners who want to abolish property taxes can now start collecting signatures for their ballot initiative.

The Ohio Ballot Board voted May 14 to certify a [constitutional amendment](#) to ban property taxes in Ohio. The proposal from [Citizens for Property Tax Reform](#) comes after years of frustration over high property taxes and the Legislature's inability to reach a solution.

"This amendment does not dismantle local government," said John Marra, mayor of the village of Timberlake near Cleveland. "It simply calls for an end to a method of taxation that many feel is unfair."

Advocates must collect 413,487 voter signatures to get their amendment on the ballot. Marra said the group hopes to make the November ballot – a tall order given the July deadline for signatures.

Ohioans have struggled with high tax bills since home values skyrocketed two years ago, but lawmakers [haven't agreed](#) on a way to provide relief. [The Ohio House budget](#) would lower property taxes in school districts with more money in their savings, but the plan is unpopular among school officials and some lawmakers.

Schools are also uneasy over the proposed amendment. At a May 12 press conference, Columbus City Schools Superintendent Angela Chapman said the consequences of losing access to property taxes as a funding method would "be significant."

"If we do not have property taxes, then how are we going to fund public education?" Chapman said. "That would be my question. We certainly have a duty and responsibility to provide the resources that we need to. To ensure quality public education for all of the children in the state, and that would come into question in terms of how we'd be able to do that without property taxes."

Board President Michael Cole said the largest part of the school's proceeds come from property taxes. In 2023, the district successfully passed a nearly \$100 million operating and improvements levy.

"Compromising property tax with no clear indication to where other proceeds would come from, puts us, and children, a city – a foundation of a city at risk," Cole said.

Property taxes don't just pay for schools

In addition to schools, property taxes help pay for police, libraries and local infrastructure projects. [No state](#) has abolished the property tax, although some including Arizona, Alabama and Hawaii have significantly lower rates.

"If it goes on the ballot, and the General Assembly and the governor have done nothing about it, it could pass and that will be a real comeuppance," House Speaker Matt Huffman, R-Lima, said. "How are you going to pay for those services?"