

Athens County

Impact of Ohio's 2012-13 state budget (HB 153)

Ohio's budget for 2012 and 2013 cut local government aid by a billion dollars. This means cuts in services we depend on, from road repair and emergency services to crossing guards, senior transportation and child protective services. What are the implications for Athens County?

The state cut the Local Government Fund to the county, forcing Athens County to make cuts to jurisdictions within the county. The state also cut direct funding to municipalities, and slashed reimbursements for taxes it had eliminated, taxes that businesses and utilities had paid to local governments. School districts and the public library fund were also cut. Losses in calendar years 2012 and 2013, compared to 2010 and 2011, include, among others:

- Public Library Fund - \$103.0 thousand
- Schools - \$7.7 million
- County operations (includes county undivided fund) - \$2.8 million
- The Plains Fire District - \$14.0 thousand
- Athens City - \$66.0 thousand
- Athens Township - \$64.0 thousand
- Nelsonville City - \$54.0 thousand
- TMBRF Health District - \$285.0 thousand

Loss to health and human service levies

- County mental health and developmental disabilities - \$440.0 thousand
- County children's services - \$247.0 thousand
- County health services - \$70.0 thousand
- County senior services - \$51.0 thousand

Notes and quotes

The latest cut (\$1.2 million in state and federal funding) forced the Athens County Job and Social Services agency to eliminate 25 positions, 18 of them through layoffs. This means the number of child support hearings [has] been cut in half from 1,100 per year to 550 and, clients are no longer assisted

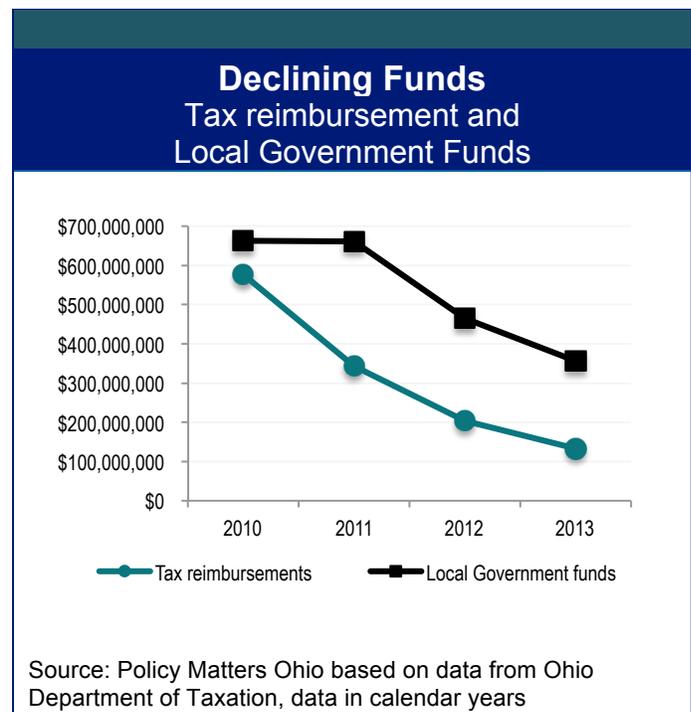
Key findings

- Athens County, its jurisdictions, schools, services and levies, lost \$11.2 million in the current state budget.
- Health and human services will lose \$808 thousand dollars.
- The Good Works Timothy House in Athens, the only homeless shelter in the area, typically serves 150 people per year, but this year they've had to turn away 138 people, including 62 children.

with Social Security disability applications. The agency helped 227 people become approved for SSI/SSD in the last year. “2010-2011 Annual Report.” Athens County Job and Family Services. <http://tinyurl.com/bwfv3cz>.

The Good Works Timothy House is the only homeless shelter in nine of Ohio’s southeast counties. It “typically serves over 150 people per year, and this year they say they’ve had to turn away 138 people, including 62 children.” – David Dewitt, Staff Writer for *The Athens News*. December 4, 2012. <http://tinyurl.com/c5b6rae>.

Tax cuts for top earners or services for the rest of us? See report on needs in Athens, all counties, at <http://jfs.athenscountygovernment.com/documents/Taxcutshelpherichandbudgetcutshurttheoor.pdf>



NOTES: The current state budget cuts the **Local Government Fund** to counties, municipalities and townships by 25 percent in the first year and by 50 percent in the second year. This 77-year old state revenue sharing program has, for generations, been essential to helping Ohio communities fund schools, provide services, and lift people out of poverty. The current state budget also phases out most of the **tangible personal property tax** and **public utility property tax reimbursements**, which were promised to local governments when the state cut taxes in recent years. These are not the only losses to local governments because of this budget. There are others in specific programs. Here we detail some of the bigger shifts. Change in revenues shown here include:

- **Local Government Fund "County Undivided Fund,"** which counties share with their cities, townships and villages. We show how much less money the counties are receiving under the current 2-year state budget (for 2012 and 2013) compared to the two years under the prior state budget (which was for 2010 and 2011). Here the funds are shown on a calendar year basis because that is how the tax department forecasts and records their distribution to local governments, and it is how local governments budget. (The state budget is on a fiscal year basis, from July 1 to June 30).
- **Local Government "Municipal Direct" allocation** from the Local Government Fund that the state gives directly to municipalities with an income tax. This is also shown in terms of funding provided in the calendar years 2012 and 2013 compared to 2010 and 2011.
- **Property tax reimbursements** promised to local governments during tax reductions enacted earlier in the decade; loss of funding in calendar years 2012 and 2013 is compared to the level of funding provided in 2010 and 2011.

The figures for changes in funding levels are based on data provided by and spreadsheets online at the Ohio Department of Taxation for local government funds and tax reimbursement distributions.