



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## JUNE 30, 2023

### Budget & Revenue

## Ohio needs a people's budget, not more tax cuts for the wealthy

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Every Ohioan should be able to live a happy, healthy life, no matter their race, gender or ZIP code. That's why people across the state are calling on state lawmakers to [pass a state budget that provides a foundation of health and economic security](#) for all Ohioans.

Today, lawmakers on the Conference Committee released their final 2024-2025 budget, House Bill 33 (HB 33). The budget will now be sent to the full House and the full Senate for passage and then to Governor DeWine for his signature. The Governor must sign the final budget by July 1st, when the next state fiscal year begins. Before signing, the governor can line-item veto any item in the budget.

Lawmakers restored much-needed, House-passed improvements to public school funding and included additional funding to make free school meals available for more kids, support Ohio's foodbanks, and provide early childhood education opportunities to more children. However, large sections of HB 33 have little or nothing to do with normal aspects of the state budgeting process. This is especially true of language related to honesty, democracy, and the freedom to learn in Ohio's public schools, colleges and universities.

Lawmakers also retained extensive tax cuts that primarily benefit the rich and large corporations. These cuts erode the state's ability to fund policy that improves the health and well-being of Ohioans in this budget and in future budget cycles.

Governor DeWine often talks about how we can make Ohio the best state to raise a family. He can make Ohio a better state by removing provisions that don't move toward that goal. We urge Governor DeWine to act on his promise and veto these provisions.

### Ensure we have the resources to invest in Ohio's future

**Veto major cuts in the personal income tax and the Commercial Activity Tax.** The benefits of these cuts will flow [mostly to Ohio's affluent](#) and its [biggest businesses](#). The income-tax cuts in particular will reinforce our already upside-down tax system under which low-income Ohioans pay nearly twice as much of their income in state

and local taxes as the richest do. Together with the [huge untargeted sales tax holiday](#), these cuts will drain billions of dollars that could fund our schools and public services. None of these was in the governor's original budget proposal — and there is no more reason for them now than there was then.

**Veto other ineffective tax breaks the General Assembly would create or expand.**

Among these are one expanding the unproductive motion picture tax credit and another that expands the tax credit for tuition paid to nonchartered, nonpublic schools and removes the income limit that currently keeps the wealthiest Ohioans from receiving it.

## Public higher education

**Veto Senate Bill 117.** The Senate inserted into the budget language from SB 117, which seeks to create “intellectual diversity centers” at Cleveland State University, Miami University, University of Cincinnati, the Ohio State University, and the University of Toledo. These new programs amount to significant spending on legislative interference in the workings of what should be stand-alone public institutions.

## Public K-12 education

**Veto additional spending on school vouchers.** A universal voucher program would send public dollars to families with income of over \$1 million who are already sending their kids to private schools. [This is a waste of public dollars](#) and won't improve health or educational outcomes for children.

**Veto Senate Bill 1.** The governor should reconsider his support for SB 1, the state takeover of the most meaningful powers of the State Board of Education. The inclusion of SB 1 in the budget undermines democratic participation in public education and has no place in the budget process. If stakeholders deem this a priority, SB 1 should continue as a stand-alone bill that can be thoroughly debated on its own merits.

## Health care

**Veto additional barriers to health care assistance.** The budget, as it stands today, would add new barriers, including an attempt to add a work requirement for Medicaid, which would limit Ohioans' ability to get the health care assistance they need.