



Meigs County Impact of the 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 Meigs County?

The state cut the Local Government Fund to the county, forcing Meigs 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 - \$46 thousand
- Schools - \$1.7 million
- County operations (includes county undivided fund) - \$698 thousand
- Letart Township - \$20 thousand
- Middleport - \$22 thousand
- Pomeroy - \$42 thousand

Loss to health and human service levies

- County mental health/ Developmental disabilities - \$158 thousand
- County seniors services - \$37 thousand
- County health services - \$18 thousand

Note and Quotes

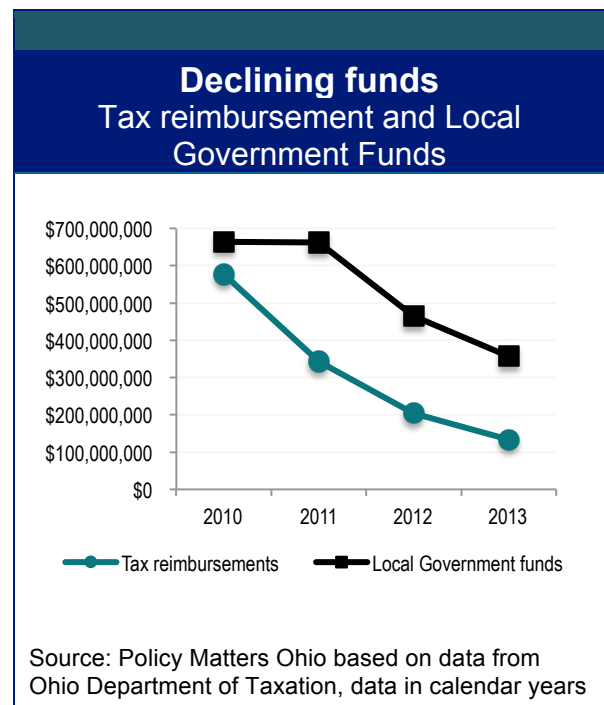
The Meigs County Library saw a 33.5 percent budget cut from 2007 to 2012. This resulted in cuts to both staff and hours of operation at all four branches. The library laid off five full-time and five part-time employees in 2009. From "Library hoping to maintain services with help of tax levy," *Daily Sentinel*, February 7, 2012. <http://tinyurl.com/9hfya5s>.

Key findings

- Meigs County, its jurisdictions, schools, services and levies, lost \$2.4 million dollars in the current state budget.
- Health and human services lost \$214,000 dollars.
- Drug problems are urgent while social service funds are cut: Of the 39 children removed from homes in 2011, 78% (30 children) due to drug-related problems.
- The Help Me Grow program was \$79,000 in fiscal year 2012, less than half of the allotted \$140,000 of the year before.

“Before, we [children’s services] had a staff of 10. Right now, we’re hiring one person, which will put us at 6. We’ve lost case workers, unit support workers...it makes it difficult to do everything.” – Chris Shank, Director of Meigs County Job & Family Services. Phone interview, summer 2012.

Six years ago the Department of Job and Family Services employed a staff of 56, now “thirty-eight seems to be the number for us.” Over the same time period, food stamps caseloads have increased about 60 percent. The department has lost \$1.75 million in state and federal funding over the last three years, 32 percent of which was cut in 2011. This staggered hit triggered a 15 percent cut to child support services, 10 percent to income assistance, another 10 percent to social services, and a final 27 percent cut to Ohio Works First. The juvenile diversion program, which empowers young offenders to assist the court to expunge their records, was cut by 40 percent. Senior services were reduced by 50 percent. “2011 Annual Report,” Meigs County Job and Family Services, <http://tinyurl.com/8b5ngj3>, and phone interview, Chris Shank, Summer 2012.



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 based on the fiscal year, July 1 through 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. The 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.