

Please provide responses of not more than 150 words each on or before October 1, 2014. (150ish is fine, no one is counting)

1. Are you familiar with the township form of government and do you support it?

I spent the first 21 years of my life in Brunswick Hills Township, during which time I witnessed conflict between township residents that wanted to stay in a rural community and those desiring municipal services. Compulsory annexation for the purposes of receiving those services was a recurring discussion at the dinner table. I have been an associate member of the Medina County Township Association since the early 1990's, when I was a Brunswick City Councilman. I have always been supportive of the township form of government and the preferences for maintaining a rural atmosphere for residents, however they define that to be. Also, as a County Commissioner, I have witnessed the close ties between County and township governments. Counties provide a myriad of services to townships and their residents, from building, stormwater and highway permits, to planning services, legal counsel, and emergency management, to name just a few.

2. Are you familiar with how townships are funded?

County Commissioners provide a range of services to the townships,. However, most of the local services that townships provide are funded through real estate taxes composed of inside millage and outside millage voted upon by township voters. Each Medina County township receives 2.6 mills (except Hinckley, which receives 2.55 mills) that can be used for general fund and road/bridge purposes. Additional taxes to fund EMS, Fire or Police can be generated via levies approved by majority of township voters. Additional sources of funding include local government funds distributed by the State of Ohio and grants from federal, state, county or other sources which may be available to townships for specific purposes. State Motor Vehicle License fees and State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax proceeds are also distributed to townships utilizing a population-based formula. Townships also have a permissive motor vehicle license tag fee that provides additional funding upon approval of voters.

3. How would you characterize the relationship between the state and local governments?

Townships are local subdivisions of the state and accordingly are subject to laws enacted by the General Assembly. Like county government, townships are known as "Dillon Rule" forms of government. That is, they may only do those things specifically authorized by the General Assembly. However, history provides ample evidence of support for the benefits of "local democracy" in that many decisions regarding taxation, land use planning, types and level of public safety services provided, as well as a whole host of typically "municipal" services are at the discretion of local governments through their township trustees, often working in concert with their County

Commissioners. In my opinion, the State of Ohio has an obligation to provide for and support local decisions regarding those issues, establish a reliable and fair local taxing system, and continue revenue sharing of statewide taxing resources in accordance with commitments dating back as far as passage of the 1934 Retail Sales Tax.

4. What is your position on consolidation of local government and/or regionalism?

Townships tend to have lower expenditures per capita than villages and cities, as well as lower per capita debt service and lower per capita administrative costs. In other words, townships tend to spend less and borrow less per capita than cities and villages. Smaller governments are typically more responsive and more accessible to their constituents. The concept that forced mergers of local governments can add to efficiencies or improve voter satisfaction with local government has yet to be proven. In fact, the evidence points entirely in the opposite direction. However, cooperative/joint services of local governments achieved through careful, rational deliberation by public officials on a voluntary basis can provide immense opportunities for improved efficiencies and better levels of services. Local government officials need more options - not fewer - in dealing with the current challenge of escalating cost and stagnant revenues. State government needs to encourage and facilitate such opportunities.