

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

**RECOVERY · RESILIENCY · EQUITY** 





















Fellow Ohioans,

In 2016, five years ago, the Ohio Mayors Alliance was formed to bring mayors together and strengthen our advocacy efforts. Much has happened in the last few years, but our commitment to advocating for our communities, building stronger partnerships with state and local officials, and demonstrating the importance of bipartisan leadership has never been stronger.

Our policy priorities focused on three themes in 2021: Recovery, Resiliency, and Equity. To rebuild following the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to have a strong recovery. We also had to be resilient, knowing the recovery would take time and we would face setbacks along the way. We also prioritized equity because the pandemic revealed serious disparities in our communities that must be addressed if we are truly committed to a brighter future for all Ohioans.

As we look ahead to next year, we will have many new mayors joining our bipartisan coalition. We look forward to welcoming these new leaders to our group and continuing our advocacy work together. We will also say goodbye to several mayors who played a key role in starting the Ohio Mayors Alliance and bringing this coalition together.

In this 2021 Annual Report, we will reflect on the past year and highlight our mayors and our collective work together. We will also recognize our outgoing mayors for their contributions to our organization. We hope you will take a moment to read through the pages of this report and learn more about the Ohio Mayors Alliance.

Respectfully,

Mayor Dan Horrigan, City of Akron

Mayor David Scheffler, City of Lancaster

Mayor Andrew Ginther, City of Columbus

City of Parma

Mayor Tim DeGeeter, Mayor Jamael Tito

Christina M. Muryn

Mayor Christina Muryn,

City of Findlay

Mayor Jamael Tito Brown, City of Youngstown

Mayor Don Patterson, City of Kettering

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to strengthen Ohio's cities and metropolitan regions through collaboration, communication, improved advocacy, and stronger partnerships with policymakers. We advocate for policies that bring communities and leaders together, ensure a high quality of life for our citizens, and strengthen the economic vibrancy of our communities and our state.



Left to Right: Grove City Mayor Richard Stage, Euclid Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail, Lima Mayor David Berger, Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan, Kettering Mayor Don Patterson, Findlay Mayor Christina Muryn, Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther, Lancaster Mayor David Scheffler, Middletown Mayor Nicole Condrey, Beavercreek Mayor Bob Stone, Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, Dublin Mayor Chris Amorose Groomes



Toledo

## 2021 POLICY PRIORITIES

Promoting a safe, stable, and strong recovery from the coronavirus pandemic

Addressing racial inequality, promoting justice, and improving public safety

Advocating for a balanced redistricting process that strengthens our democracy

Promoting the economic impacts of cities and the value of continued investments Strengthening educational attainment and career pathways for the next generation

Advancing clean energy solutions and supporting improved sustainability

Promoting healthy communities and continuing to confront the addiction crisis

Protecting and promoting the importance of home rule for local communities

Finding solutions for more accessible housing and cities' comprehensive infrastructure needs

#### **OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE**

MAYOR THOMAS PERCIAK STRONGSVILLE

**GROVE CITY** 





RICHARD "IKE" STAGE

MAYOR







OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE



JASON STEIN **CLEVELAND HEIGHTS** 

MAYOR

MAYOR

SPRINGFIELD

WARREN COPELAND

STEVE MILLER

FAIRFIELD



MAYOR











# **MEMBERS**







MAYOR ANDREW GINTHER COLUMBUS

MAYOR

MAYOR

PARMA

TIM DEGEETER

DON PATTERSON KETTERING



MAYOR

FINDLAY

MAYOR

MAYOR

JAMAEL TITO BROWN

YOUNGSTOWN

LANCASTER

DAVID SCHEFFLER

CHRISTINA MURYN



## BOARD **MEMBERS**

MAYOR DAN HORRIGAN



MAYOR WADE KAPSZUKIEWICZ TOLEDO



MAYOR WILLIAM D. FRANKLIN WARREN



MAYOR DAVID BERGER LIMA



AMOROSE GROOMES DUBLIN





MAYOR FRANK WHITFIELD **ELYRIA** 



MAYOR JACK BRADLEY LORAIN



NICOLE CONDREY

MIDDLETOWN



MAYOR

DAYTON

MAYOR

LAKEWOOD

MEGHAN GEORGE

NAN WHALEY





BOB STONE

BEAVERCREEK

MAYOR

TOM BERNABEI

CANTON



MAYOR JOHN CRANLEY CINCINNATI



\*Chair of Mayors' Partnership for Progress, representing mayors and city managers from Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington counties.

MAYOR

# RECOVERY

As vaccine distribution began in early 2021, our mayors knew we were entering a new phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. We now had a tool to fight the virus and begin to rebuild from the devastation caused by the pandemic. Recovery would mean coordinating local vaccine distribution, stabilizing their local economies, and bringing resources to our residents that were impacted by the economic crisis.

## **Vaccine Initiatives**

Mayors and their local health departments helped coordinate the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to their residents. This included developing systems that did not yet exist to connect residents with vaccine appointments. Additionally, as data showed a slow uptake of vaccines by hesitant populations, our mayors developed campaigns to combat misinformation and connect with hard-to-reach populations. Our mayors also offered numerous incentives including lotteries, gift cards, and community events to incentivize vaccination.

We know that a vaccinated population will be key to rebounding our economies and our mayors will continue to encourage vaccinations as boosters are rolled out and more age groups are made eligible.



Clockwise from top left: Mayor Don Patterson, City of Kettering; Mayor Frank Whitfield, City of Elyria; Mayor Tom Bernabei, City of Canton; Mayor Don Walters, City of Cuyahoga Falls



After months of bipartisan advocacy support, the American Rescue Plan Act passed, delivering relief to state and local governments across the country. ARPA provided over \$1.5 billion in direct, flexible fiscal assistance to our cities to help balance budgets, support public health, bring back



Mayor David Berger, City of Lima, with Karen Kasler, Statehouse News Bureau Chief

furloughed municipal employees, and invest in their communities to address the economic challenges brought by the pandemic. Local economic recovery will support a nationwide recovery.

Our cities are listening to their residents to ensure these funds are put to the most effective use in their cities. However, many cities have begun to outline areas in which investment will have the greatest impact, including public health, public safety, housing, community development, and business recovery.



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Mayor Nan Whaley, City of Dayton, was named as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 2021 and led a bipartisan effort to pass the American Rescue Plan and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Top: Mayor Nan Whaley and Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt led the national, bipartisan advocacy efforts of mayors.

Bottom: Mayor Nan Whaley joined President Biden at the bill signing of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, November 15, 2021.



## The Columbus Dispatch

### Ohio mayors: Billions from American Rescue Plan will help get nation back to normal

Published 3:15 p.m. ET April 1, 2021 Updated 10:31 a.m. ET April 2, 2021



The Ohio Mayors Alliance Board of Directors: (top left to right) Mayor Tim DeGeeter (D-Parma); Mayor Nan Whaley (D-Dayton), Mayor Andrew J. Ginther (D-Columbus); Mayor John Cranley (D-Cincinnati), Mayor Christina Muryn (R-Findlay), Mayor Don Patterson (R-Kettering) and Mayor David Scheffler (R-Lacasteds. Submitted



THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE July 1, 2021

ICYMI: Ohio Mayors Alliance Holds Press Call Urging Congressional Action on Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework

Today, the Ohio Mayors Alliance held a press call in support of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework announced last week by President Biden and Senators from both sides of the aisle.

Five bipartisan mayors from cities across Ohio representing the Ohio Mayors Alliance, highlighted the critical investments the framework will make in the nation's infrastructure and emphasized the "\$1.2 trillion in roads, bridges, transit, rail networks, highways, green infrastructure, and more."

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework will not just make strides and improvements to our roads and bridges, but will also make key investments to make sure our economy is more sustainable, resilient, and equitable.

"This bill will also make important investments in the future of transportation, by investing in EV infrastructure and ensuring high-speed Internet connectivity for all our residents, building a more sustainable, resilient, and just economy," said Dayton Mayor and US Conference of Mayors President Nan Whaley.

The mayors stressed the importance of this package as "long-term investment in our country's people and economic competitiveness," and urged Congress to move swiftly and pass the bill.

## **OneOhio Settlement**

As state and local governments pursued their lawsuits against opioid manufacturers and distributors, it became clear that Ohio's state and local governments should come together in a joint settlement to secure the most resources for our residents. Through negotiations, these state and local governments developed the OneOhio settlement. Through this agreement, money from opioid settlements will be distributed to local governments and to regions throughout Ohio. These resources will bring real recovery to communities and people after years of damage, destruction, and heartache from the ongoing opioid epidemic.

Money from these settlements will help support local treatment specialists, first responders, nurses, and many others who are critical to the recovery process. Our mayors, and other local leaders who have consistently been on the frontlines of the opioid epidemic, will play a key role in determining how resources are distributed in their region and how money from the statewide foundation can have the maximum impact throughout the state.

# RESILIENCY

Ohio cities have developed a capacity for resiliency after dealing with pressures from the Great Recession and then deep cuts to the local government fund in 2011. In 2021, this capacity for resiliency was tested when our cities were forced to deliver high-quality public services while municipal budgets were strained and COVID surges were ongoing.

Mayor David Scheffler, City of Lancaster, with Governor Mike DeWine

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## **Supporting Public Health**

The successful development and distribution of COVID vaccines in early 2021 showed a possible end to the pandemic. By late summer, the Delta variant of COVID-19 halted the progress we were making. Many of our cities made the difficult decision to reinstate certain COVID precautions to ensure the health and safety of their residents.

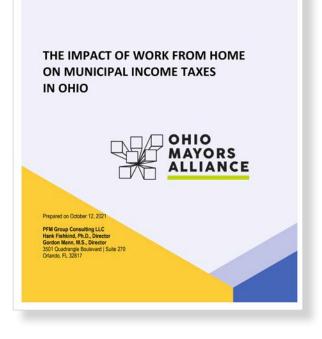


Top: Mayor Tim DeGeeter, City of Parma; Bottom Left: Mayor Andrew Ginther, City of Columbus; Bottom Right: Mayor Jamael Tito Brown, City of Youngstown

## **RECOVERY · RESILIENCY · EQUITY**



Left to Right: Mayor Jamael Tito Brown, City of Youngstown, Mayor Andrew Ginther, City of Columbus, Mayor Christina Muryn, City of Findlay



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## **Impacts of Remote Working on Cities**

One of the many challenges during the pandemic was the need to continue delivering high-quality public services to our residents, while also mitigating the pandemic, and balancing budgets that were under stress.

Ohio cities rely heavily on municipal income tax. As the pandemic drove many to work from home, our mayors knew this could have significant, long-term impacts on their budgets and hinder Ohio's economic recovery.

In the short term, we worked with the Ohio State Legislature and employer associations to pass a provision in the state budget that extended tax withholding until the end of 2021, providing certainty to our cities through the end of the year. We then commissioned a study to better understand how remote working would impact our cities long-term. The study showed that remote work will continue after the pandemic and that it will have 'significant impacts' on the fiscal health of cities across Ohio.

The report estimated that 33 percent of the workforce could work from home, based on economic data in a cross-section of 10 Ohio cities. The resulting fiscal impacts vary by city, but range between a loss of 6 and 17 percent of municipal income tax revenue within a city's general fund.



Mayor Chris Amorose Groomes, City of Dublin (Right), opening the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor





Top: Mayor Don Patterson, City of Kettering (Middle), with Kettering Health On-Demand Care; Bottom: Mayor Bob Stone, City of Beavercreek (Right)

## **State and Local Partnerships**

Through the biennial state budget process, we worked to advocate for programs that would help rebuild our communities and spur development. This included over \$750 million for broadband expansion, brownfield remediation, building demolition, and site revitalization.

For many of our cities, brownfields and abandoned properties are major hindrances to new economic development projects. State partnership in support of these projects benefits our residents and drives the state economy forward.

Additionally, the digital divide that was exposed by the pandemic got an assist from a state grant program that will help bring broadband to under-served and under-resourced communities. Digital connectivity will be vital to the future economic competitiveness of our state.



# EQUITY

As we all learned in 2020, deep disparities in opportunity still exist in our communities. Mayors have the power at the local level to bring about change in their community and develop policies and programs that address these deep-seeded divisions. Addressing racial and economic inequality will take an all sides, all hands on deck approach, and our mayors are committed to the work for the betterment of all their residents.

## **ARPA Utilization Program**

With a large number of resources coming to our cities through the American Rescue Plan, our coalition launched the ARPA Utilization Program thanks to funding support from the Joyce Foundation. This program will support our cities as they try to make sense of the U.S. Treasury Guidance and find areas of collaboration, so we can ensure these dollars have maximum local impact.

This program will help show that these investments are having a real impact on individuals and fostering more equitable and just communities. We will work with our mayors to communicate the value of these investments to residents and our state and federal policymakers.







Top Right: Mayor Jamael Tito Brown, City of Youngstown (Left), Guy Coviello, President & CEO of Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber (Middle), Mayor William D. Franklin, City of Warren (Right), Middle Right: Mayor Thomas Perciak, City of Strongsville and Lt. Governor Jon Husted; Bottom Right: Mayor Christina Muryn, City of Findlay; Left: Mayor Meghan George, City of Lakewood (Left), with Lakewood Fire Department

## **RECOVERY · RESILIENCY · EQUITY**



## Improved Policing Practices and Violence Intervention Strategies

In 2021, our cities continued to work to bring accountability and transparency to policing while also dealing with rising crime rates. Through the work of the Mayors and Police Chiefs Leadership Committee, we were able to secure over \$10 million for body-worn camera grants to local police departments, grants to implement local crime reduction strategies, and money to support recruitment, hiring, and training of qualified individuals to serve as peace officers.



Top: Mayor Dan Horrigan, City of Akron; Middle Left: Mayor Richard Stage, City of Grove City, with Grove City Police Department; Middle Right: Mayor Jack Bradley, City of Lorain (Left), Governor Mike DeWine (Middle), Chief James McCann, Lorain Police Department; Bottom Left: Chief Eric Merkel, City of Warren (Left) Governor Mike DeWine (Middle), Mayor William Franklin, City of Warren (Right); Bottom Right: Mayor John Cranley, City of Cincinnati (Middle) with Cincinnati Police Department Cadets

## **Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**

At the close of the year, the Biden administration passed the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Thanks to the effective advocacy of our mayors and mayors across the country, including the U.S. Conference of Mayors President, Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, this bill will revitalize our nation's infrastructure, create thousands of goodpaying jobs and enable our country to compete and lead in the 21st century. This bill will help us tackle our country's biggest challenges, modernizing our roads and bridges, improving our energy and water infrastructure, developing clean energy technology, and providing every American with a broadband connection.

## **Local Climate Action**

In 2021, four more of our cities joined the Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO) campaign – Lima, Warren, Cleveland Heights, and Toledo – bringing the total number of Ohio Mayors Alliance cities in PCFO up to 10.

PCFO is a broad-based coalition to promote climate action on the local level through partnerships with cities and local governments. With the state rollback of Ohio's renewable energy standards, energy action on the local level is going to be key to moving Ohio forward. Throughout the year, mayors from across the state signed a pledge to implement equitable climate policy in their cities and began developing and implementing citywide sustainability plans.

Pictured top to bottom: Mayor Warren Copeland, City of Springfield; Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, City of Toledo (center); Mayor John Cranley, City of Cincinnati (center); Mayor Steve Patterson, City of Athens (left); Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail, City of Euclid



# **MAYORS' LEADERSHIP COMMITTEES**

This year, we launched two standing committees to support the policy priorities of the organization and support our advocacy at the Statehouse.

## MAYORS AND POLICE CHIEFS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Mayors and Police Chiefs Leadership Committee brings together mayors and police chiefs of our cities to tackle the most pressing issues in our cities, including police accountability and transparency, the rise in violent crime, and the recruitment of high-quality police officers. The committee has also led an effort to improve police training in our state, including advocating for dedicated, sustainable funding for police training.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**



Mayor Bob Stone Beavercreek



Jack Angelo Canton Police Chief



Eliot Isaac Cincinnati Police Chief



**Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail** Euclid



Kevin Martin Lima Police Chief



Mayor Nicole Condrey Middletown



Mayor Warren Copeland Springfield



**Mayor Jamael Tito Brown** Youngstown



Mayor Dan Horrigan, City of Akron, at McKinley Early Childhood Education Center preschool graduation

## EDUCATION ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Educational attainment and workforce development are critical to the health and vibrancy of our communities. Our mayors are concerned about the future economic development of their cities and are acutely aware of how the pandemic has affected our education system. This committee has been working with educational leaders to advocate for increased school funding and the utilization of ARPA funds to support the whole child and family with community-based wraparound services.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**



**Mayor Dan Horrigan** Akron



Mayor Steve Patterson Athens



Mayor Chris Amorose Groomes Dublin



Mayor Frank Whitfield Elyria



Mayor Meghan George Lakewood



Mayor David Scheffler Lancaster



Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz Toledo

## **RECOGNIZING OUR OUTGOING MAYORS**

At the end of this year, we have several mayors who are retiring, are term limited, or have decided to run for another office. Each of these mayors were in office when we formed the Ohio Mayors Alliance and many of them played a key role in helping to create this organization.

### DAYTON MAYOR NAN WHALEY

Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley has been the heart and soul of the Ohio Mayors Alliance since before the organization had its name. Traveling across the state and meeting with mayors in 2015, she helped to turn the idea of the Ohio Mayors Alliance into reality. Mayor Whaley has a unique combination of sincerity, substance, and style which has helped her to lead the Ohio Mayors Alliance, and to serve as the National President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. She has earned friends on both sides of the aisle and across the country for her insightfulness as a leader and thoughtfulness as a friend.





### **KETTERING MAYOR DON PATTERSON**

Mayor Don Patterson's no-nonsense approach to leadership has earned him the support from his community to serve four terms as mayor, and the respect of his peers in the Ohio Mayors Alliance. He has served on the Ohio Mayors Alliance Board of Directors since our formation five years ago. Mayor Patterson's steady voice and belief in the importance of our bipartisan approach has given the Ohio Mayors Alliance the credibility it deserves. Mayor Patterson has also earned the unofficial award as one of the all-time nicest and most appreciative elected officials ever!

#### **CINCINNATI MAYOR JOHN CRANLEY**

As a two-term mayor for the City of Cincinnati, Mayor Cranley quickly recognized the need to bring Ohio's mayors together in a bipartisan way to improve our advocacy efforts. In 2016, he helped organize a dinner with several of Ohio's mayors that ultimately helped launch the Ohio Mayors Alliance. Smart, uncompromising, and always hard-charging, Mayor Cranley has been a force as Cincinnati's mayor, and leader amongst leaders in the Ohio Mayors Alliance.





#### LIMA MAYOR DAVID BERGER

As one of the longest serving mayors in the Ohio Mayors Alliance, Mayor Berger's 32 years of experience and knowledge of municipal issues has been so important to our coalition. Mayor Berger has more knowledge about municipal water infrastructure than most city leaders will ever know. His indefatigable approach to the job, understanding of the complexities of governing and leading a city will be greatly missed. Mayor Berger also fundamentally understood the importance of our collective, bipartisan state advocacy efforts. He was a great champion of our approach as a bipartisan coalition. His leadership and experience will be greatly missed.

#### FAIRFIELD MAYOR STEVE MILLER

Mayor Steve Miller was one of the first Republican leaders to become a member of the Ohio Mayors Alliance. He recognized the need for mayors to join together and build better relationships with our state and local leaders. Mayor Miller earned the support of his residents to serve two full terms as mayor, and the respect of his colleagues in state government and within the Ohio Mayors Alliance.



# The Ohio Mayors Alliance is a bipartisan coalition of mayors of Ohio's largest cities.

The Ohio Mayors Alliance was formed in 2016 to advocate for our communities and our constituents by speaking with one voice about the challenges and opportunities of Ohio's cities.

The Ohio Mayors Alliance is structured to ensure that there is bipartisanship and consensus among cities. The board members must represent both political parties, as well as both large and small member cities. Adoption of any official policy position by the Ohio Mayors Alliance must be approved by a supermajority, or two-thirds, of total membership.

### **OUR TEAM**



Keary McCarthy Executive Director



Todd Bradley Policy Director



Sarah Biehl Senior Policy Advisor



Katherine Liming Communications & Events Manager



**Shawn Kasych** Statehouse Advocate Principal, Kasych Group LLC

# OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE

### FOUNDATION

In 2021, we officially launched the Ohio Mayors Alliance Foundation under the leadership of our bipartisan Board of state and local leaders. The Foundation is led by Former Governor Bob Taft, Former Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman, and Former Cleveland Mayor Jane Campbell.

The Ohio Mayors Alliance Foundation is an affiliated 501 (c)(3) that serves as the policy and research arm for our mayors, focusing on innovative local policy solutions. Over the course of the year, the Foundation has supported research in police reform, educational attainment, workforce development, and in the last quarter of 2021, is supporting our ARPA Utilization Program.



FORMER GOVERNOR BOB TAFT



FORMER CLEVELAND MAYOR JANE CAMPBELL



FORMER COLUMBUS MAYOR MICHAEL COLEMAN



This year, the Ohio Mayors Alliance moved into a new office space in downtown Columbus across the street from the Ohio Statehouse. In addition to having dedicated office space for staff, these new offices will also host our mayors' meetings and events. **OHIO MAYORS ALLIANCE** 

10 W. Broad St., Suite 1520 Columbus, OH 43215

> **TWITTER** @OhioMayors

FACEBOOK @OhioMayorsAlliance

**OHIOMAYORSALLIANCE.ORG** 





#### **MEMBER CITIES**

Mayor | Population

**AKRON** Daniel Horrigan 190,469

ATHENS Steve Patterson\* 23,849

**BEAVERCREEK** Bob Stone 46,549

**CANTON** Tom Bernabei 70,872

**CINCINNATI** John Cranley 309,317

**CLEVELAND HEIGHTS** Jason Stein 45,312

**COLUMBUS** Andrew Ginther 905,748

CUYAHOGA FALLS Don Walters 51,114

DAYTON Nan Whaley 137,644

DUBLIN Chris Amorose Groomes 49,328

ELYRIA Frank Whitfield 52,656

**EUCLID** Kirsten Holzheimer Gail 49,692

FAIRFIELD Steve Miller 44,907

\* Chair of Mayors' Partnership for Progress FINDLAY Christina Muryn 40,313

**GROVE CITY** Richard "Ike" Stage 41,252

**KETTERING** Don Patterson 57,862

LAKEWOOD Meghan George 50,942

LANCASTER David Scheffler 40,552

LIMA David Berger 35,579

LORAIN Jack Bradley 65,211

MIDDLETOWN Nicole Condrey 50,987

PARMA Tim DeGeeter 81,146

SPRINGFIELD Warren Copeland 58,662

STRONGSVILLE Thomas Perciak 46,491

**TOLEDO** Wade Kapszukiewicz 270,871

WARREN William D. Franklin 39,201

YOUNGSTOWN Jamael Tito Brown 60,068







































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