



News Release – August 9, 2023

Butler Value Increases Meet State Demands Auditor Forced to Raise Some Amounts Multiple Times before Approval

HAMILTON, Ohio – It took three submittals for the state Department of Tax Equalization (DTE) to finally approve the value abstract from the Butler County Auditor's Office. In the end, the median residential value increase from the state-mandated triennial update for Butler County is 37 percent.

“We kept trying to hold the line on value increases but the state didn't move much through the process,” said Butler County Auditor Nancy Nix. “It's now time to turn our attention to convincing local governments to help taxpayers out.”

The highest median increase for a local political subdivision is Monroe at 41 percent, followed by Fairfield and Middletown at 40 percent each. The lowest median value increases are in the small Butler County portion of Sharonville, 25 percent; and Millville, 27 percent.

Nix submitted her first tentative abstract to the DTE for approval on July 14. The state rejected the proposed overall value increase of 33 percent and responded that residential values were still too low in nine political subdivisions – Fairfield, Fairfield Twp., Hamilton, Hanover Twp., Liberty Twp., Madison Twp., Monroe, Oxford, and West Chester Twp.

A second abstract was submitted on July 21 and a few more political subdivisions were approved by the state, but not the county median, Fairfield, Liberty Twp., or Monroe.

The final abstract was submitted on Aug. 3 and met the criteria the DTE sought for those entities and the county's overall median value increase. It was approved on Aug. 8.

Originally, the state recommended a 42 percent median residential increase for Butler County as a whole.

Since the Board of Tax Appeals ruled against Butler County's 2020 reappraisal appeal, determining that the tax commissioner has wide latitude in creating a representative sample to use in determining values, the Auditor had limited options in reaching compliance.

Keep in mind that the percentage increases are in property values. While values play a role in determining property taxes, there are many other components.

Due to House Bill 920, passed in 1976, inflationary property value increases have for years only had a minor impact on corresponding tax increases because tax rates could be adjusted downward so levies would still collect their voted amount. However, the law also specifies that the application of these tax reduction factors cannot cause a school district's effective current expense millage rate (inside and outside combined) to fall below 20 mills (this is referred to as the 20-mill floor). In Butler County, 8 of the 10 school districts are at the 20-mill floor. Only Lakota and Fairfield are not.

While tax rates can be adjusted downward in those two school districts to lessen tax increases, homeowners in the other eight districts will receive a tax increase on the school portion of their tax bill closely aligned to their property value increase following the state-mandated triennial update.

Nix has suggested that local governments that receive inflationary increases in their unvoted or “inside” millage voluntarily forgo the increased amounts the new property values would generate for a year. This would provide the legislature more time to change property tax law to protect homeowners from rising taxes.

“We still have to discuss the details with the local governments but at this point there aren’t many options left,” Nix said. “I am very concerned that increased tax bills are going to be too much to bear for some people.”

Jurisdiction	Median increase	Status
BUTLER COUNTY	37%	Approved (8/8)*
Fairfield	40%	Approved (8/8)*
Fairfield Twp.	35%	Approved (8/1)*
Hamilton	33%	Approved (8/1)*
Hanover Twp.	35%	Approved (8/1)*
Lemon Twp.	37%	Approved (7/24)*
Liberty Twp.	38%	Approved (8/8)*
Madison Twp.	39%	Approved (8/1)*
Middletown	40%	Approved (7/24)*
Milford Twp.	32%	Approved (7/24)*
Millville	27%	Approved (7/24)*
Monroe	41%	Approved (8/8)*
Morgan Twp.	38%	Approved (7/24)*
New Miami	32%	Approved (7/24)*
Oxford	30%	Approved (8/1)*
Oxford Twp.	31%	Approved (7/24)*
Reily Twp.	34%	Approved (7/24)*
Ross Twp.	32%	Approved (7/24)*
Sharonville	25%	Approved (7/24)*
St. Clair Twp.	30%	Approved (7/24)*
Trenton	37%	Approved (7/24)*
Wayne Twp.	29%	Approved (7/24)*
West Chester Twp.	39%	Approved (8/1)*
<i>*State Dept. of Tax Equalization determines approved status.</i>		