

News Release, May 21, 2008

**Auditor Reynolds to Testify on Homestead-Related Ohio Senate Bill 306 on Behalf of Seniors and Permanently and Totally Disabled Ohioans**

HAMILTON, OHIO – Butler County Auditor Roger Reynolds is appearing today in front of the Ohio Senate’s Ways & Means and Economic Development Committee to testify in favor of Senate Bill 306.

SB 306 will amend sections 135.804, 323.151, and 323.159 of the Revised Code to change the definition of “housing cooperative” for the purposes of the county homestead tax exemptions and property tax payment link deposit programs for low-to-moderate income senior citizens and permanently disabled citizens and to expand the definition of a homestead to include settlers of irrevocable inter vivos trusts.

Currently, seniors and the disabled who have placed their home in an irrevocable trust are not eligible for the Homestead Exemption, and SB 306 would change that.

Auditor Roger Reynolds has been a long-time supporter of the Homestead Exemption and other pertinent issues regarding seniors and disabled citizens. A portion of Auditor Reynolds’ testimony demonstrates his concern for those senior and disabled citizens that protected their homes through a trust and currently are not eligible for the Homestead discount:

“Last year’s Homestead Exemption, despite its good intentions and solid results, did not include all deserving senior citizens and permanently and totally disabled citizens who owned homes in Ohio. The language of the Act omits those who had placed their homes in irrevocable trusts. The idea of the original legislation was to help those who owned their home regardless of their estate planning arrangement. Irrevocable trusts make a great deal of sense for many senior citizens and permanently and totally disabled Ohioans. Senate Bill 306 would allow the exemption for homesteads held in irrevocable trusts and thus granting previously intended, but currently excluded, citizens to take part in the tax relief.

In essence, now is the opportunity for this committee and eventually the Senate to make the Homestead Exemption apply fairly for all seniors and disabled Ohioans. By approving Senate Bill 306, your Committee has taken an important step in assuring that senior and disabled tax relief will be available for all who sincerely need it.”