

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carroll County Auditor to Forgo Real Estate Assessment Fund Fees for 2025

Carroll County Auditor Staci Brady would like to share that the Auditor's Office will not collect Real Estate Assessment Fund (REA) fees for the 2025 tax year. County Auditors are not permitted to return these funds directly to taxpayers because the fees are generated from approved levies. However, this decision will generate additional revenue for taxing districts, providing them flexibility to make adjustments that could directly benefit property owners for the upcoming year. This action will allow approximately \$800,000 to be distributed among the taxing districts in the same proportion as regular property tax collections.

Auditor Brady supports ongoing efforts across Ohio to improve property tax fairness and provide relief to taxpayers. Proposed solutions from the County Auditors' Association of Ohio (CAAO) include:

- Expanding the Homestead Program to provide additional relief to more homeowners.
- Eliminating the Non-Business Credit and expanding the Owner-Occupancy Credit to better target assistance to those who live in their homes.
- Limiting the growth in revenue received by school districts due to reappraisal changes, ensuring tax increases are not disproportionately driven by valuation updates.
- Creating a menu of targeted relief options to allow flexibility in addressing the diverse needs of Ohio taxpayers.

The Real Estate Assessment Fund is a special fund maintained by counties in Ohio to support the activities of the County Auditor's real estate assessment operations. This fund supports the operations that ensure property taxes are calculated fairly, including:

- Reappraising and updating property values
- Maintaining accurate property tax records
- Conducting property inspections and data collection
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping, which helps accurately locate and manage parcels for assessment, planning, and public access

Auditor Brady stated, "I can no longer wait for the state legislature to act. I feel I need to do everything within my authority to help reduce the tax burden on Carroll County taxpayers. I hope this action encourages other officials to consider steps they can take to reduce the tax burden as well."

This decision is part of the Auditor's ongoing efforts to provide relief to taxpayers during the recent countywide reappraisal, while maintaining fairness and transparency in the distribution of county revenues.