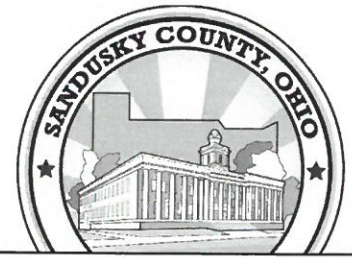


SANDUSKY COUNTY

Commissioners, **H**uman **R**esources, **R**isk **M**anagement



Board of Commissioners:

Charles Schwochow

Russ Zimmerman

Scott Miller

County Administrator:

Theresa Garcia

garcia.theresa@co.sandusky.oh.us

The Honorable
Mike DeWine Governor
77 South High Street, 30 Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

Sandusky County Commissioners were pleased that you have accepted the invitation of the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce to meet with business leaders about the importance of a free-flow connection between northwest Ohio and central Ohio.

The status of Route 23 in Delaware County creates significant safety concerns and leaves an entire portion of the State of Ohio disconnected from Columbus and central Ohio. Unfortunately, the current problems are only expected to get worse over the next two decades as we see continued growth in both population and economic opportunity.

Leaders in our region were optimistic when ODOT announced in 2021 that it would conduct the Route 23 Connect Study to determine the feasibility of options to create a free-flowing connection between the Toledo and Columbus regions; and this project is essential to our regional partner organizations, and the County is disappointed in the decision of ODOT to end the study more than a year early with no plans for a long term solution for improved travel on this corridor.

The planned opening of the Gordie Howe International Bridge in 2024 will create economic opportunities for Ohio, and plans are needed to improve this route to avoid interrupting the flow of commerce and exports between Ohio and Canada. This route is an important component of the anticipated extension of the Interstate 23/24/75 corridor, and increasing congestion impedes the movement of travelers and goods between Ohio and the southeastern United States.

We respectfully request you reconsider your decision to end the route 23 connect study and support an improved highway connection between Northwest Ohio and Columbus.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Charles Schwochow

Commissioner Russ Zimmerman

Commissioner Scott Miller