



BLUESTONE
LAW GROUP, LLC

141 East Town Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Telephone: (614) 220-5900

www.bluestonelawgroup.com

Facsimile: (614) 462-1930

January 14, 2015

Property Taxes Can Now Be Levied to Fund School Safety and Security

The cost of keeping students safe at school can now be passed along to property owners through special levies approved by voters in your school district.

In response to the increased violence occurring in public schools, the 130th Ohio General Assembly passed Am. Sub. Senate Bill 42¹, which gives school districts the ability to tax real property in order to raise funds to be earmarked specifically for safety and security purposes. The bill was signed into law by Governor John R. Kasich and becomes effective on March 19, 2015.

Previously, school districts were able to levy property taxes for a number of different purposes – covering current expenses, educational technology, improvements, infrastructure improvements, etc. – but security improvements were not specifically mentioned. Thus, a school's board of education was not required to designate specific amounts towards safety and security.

The new law allows school districts to place tax levy requests on the ballot, the proceeds of which would be exclusively designated for safety and security improvements, e.g., hiring more security staff members, upgrading monitoring systems, purchasing additional lighting, etc.

According to state Sen. Gayle Manning, a co-sponsor of the bill, the new law ensures that the funds raised by these voter-approved levies cannot be shifted for the district's everyday expenses or other costs. "The dollars generated by this levy would not be used for anything else."

On the other hand, critics have expressed concerns about the new law's wide-spread effectiveness on a school-to-school basis. According to Sen. Mike Skindell, this law will not ensure safety of children at all schools across the state and is merely another example of the state shifting funding to local taxpayers.

How does this affect property owners? Some property owners will see another increase in their property taxes. Ultimately, voters will have to choose whether it is worth further increasing property taxes for enhanced security at their local schools.

What's your opinion? We'd like to know.

Bluestone Law Group regularly works with property owners to lower their property taxes. Stay updated through our website: www.bluestonelawgroup.com.

Please contact us if you have questions concerning real property tax laws.

¹ [Click here](#) to view entire bill (Section 5705.21(F) contains the new language for safety and security levies).