

# 2018 OBERLIN AREA ISSUES GUIDE

## GENERAL ELECTION—NOVEMBER 6, 2018

### STATE ISSUES

#### **ISSUE 1: TO REDUCE PENALTIES FOR CRIMES OF OBTAINING, POSSESSING, AND USING ILLEGAL DRUGS**

Constitutional Amendment Proposed by Initiative Petition:  
To add a new Section 12 to Article XV of the Constitution  
of the State of Ohio. A majority yes vote is necessary for  
the amendment to pass.

If adopted, the amendment would:

Require sentence reductions of incarcerated  
individuals, except individuals incarcerated for murder,  
rape, or child molestation, by up to 25% if the individual  
participates in rehabilitative, work, or educational  
programming.

Mandate that criminal offenses of obtaining,  
possessing, or using any drug such as fentanyl, heroin,  
methamphetamine, cocaine, LSD, and other controlled  
substances cannot be classified as a felony, but only a  
misdemeanor.

Prohibit jail time as a sentence for obtaining,  
possessing, or using such drugs until an individual's third  
offense within 24 months.

Allow an individual convicted of obtaining,  
possessing, or using any such drug prior to the effective  
date of the amendment to ask a court to reduce the  
conviction to a misdemeanor, regardless of whether the  
individual has completed the sentence.

Require any available funding, based on projected savings,  
to be applied to state-administered rehabilitation programs  
and crime victim funds.

Require a graduated series of responses, such as  
community service, drug treatment, or jail time, for minor,  
non-criminal probation violations.

**PROS:** 1. It would make the possession, obtainment and  
use of drugs no more than a misdemeanor.

2. It would create a sentence reduction credits  
program for inmates' participation in rehabilitative, work,  
or educational programs

3. It would reduce the number of people in state  
prisons for low-level crimes

4. It would save tens of millions of dollars  
annually in prison spending and direct the savings to  
addiction treatment and victims of crime.

**CONS:** 1. The amendment would make it more difficult to  
prosecute drug traffickers.

2. This belongs in the Ohio Revised code. The  
constitution should contain fundamental principles and  
organization of government. Appropriation directives  
should not be added to the constitution.

3. This takes away available resources from the  
court for rehabilitating people and doesn't give judges the  
ability to use incarceration when it's necessary.

4. This proposed constitutional amendment does  
not provide adequate funding for treatment infrastructure  
nor treatment itself.

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### LORAIN COUNTY ISSUES

#### **ISSUE 8: JOINT VOCATIONAL SCHOOL LEVY**

An additional tax for the benefit of the Lorain County Joint  
Vocational School District, Lorain, Erie and Huron  
Counties, Ohio for the purpose of general permanent  
improvements at a rate not exceeding 0.75 mill for each  
one dollar of valuation, which amounts to \$0.075 for each  
one hundred dollars of valuation, for a continuing period of  
time, commencing in 2018, first due in calendar year 2019.

**Additional Information supplied by the League of Women Voters**

If approved by voters, the 0.75-mill permanent improvement levy would generate about \$4.5 million a year. The owner of a \$100,000 home would pay about \$26 a year. The money would be used to upgrade the fire alarm system and curriculum labs, repair the bus garages, add nine zones for the sprinkler system, improve the parking lots and driveways and upgrade the electrical system. Permanent improvement levies cannot be used for operations or salaries. The revenue can only be used for improvements that will last longer than five years, such as buses and building upgrades

**ISSUE 14: RECOVERY ONE LEVY**

An additional tax for the benefit of Lorain County for the purposes of supporting Human or Social Services, Hospitalization and Health at a rate not exceeding 0.3 mill for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to \$0.03 for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for 5 years, commencing in 2018, first due in calendar year 2019. A Majority Affirmative Vote Is Necessary For Passage. The levy will raise \$2 million annually and will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home about \$10.50 annually.

**Additional Information supplied by the League of Women Voters**

The levy would help fund Recovery One, which is a one-stop recovery and rehabilitation facility. The County Board of Commissioners is partnering with the Nord Family Foundation, The LCADA Way, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board of Lorain County and the Lorain County Board of Mental Health to open the facility at the former Golden Acres retirement home site.

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**OBERLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUES**

**ISSUE 11: OBERLIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOND ISSUE 2018**

Shall bonds be issued by the Oberlin City School District for the purpose of constructing, adding to, renovating, remodeling, furnishing, equipping and otherwise improving school district buildings and facilities and acquiring, clearing, improving and equipping their sites in the principal amount of \$17,760,000, to be repaid annually over a maximum period of 37 years, and an annual levy of property taxes be made outside the ten-mill limitation, estimated by the county auditor to average over the repayment period of the bond issue 4.8 mills for each one dollar of tax valuation, which amounts to \$0.48 for each one hundred dollars of tax valuation, commencing in 2018, first due in calendar year 2019, to pay the annual debt charges on the bonds, and to pay debt charges on any notes issued in anticipation of those bonds?

**Additional Information supplied by the League of Women Voters**

If approved by voters, the 4.8-mill bond issue would generate \$17.8 million, over 37 years, and would be used to construct a pre-kindergarten through grade 5 elementary school; the first phase of a consolidated facilities master plan which has been approved by the Ohio Facilities Construction Committee. The 132,370-square foot building would be constructed on a 40-acre site next to Oberlin High School. To lessen the financial impact of the bond issue, the district plans to not collect one mill of the current improvement property tax money effective January 2019. As a result, the additional property tax, at 3.8 mills per \$100,000 in property value, is about \$133 per year. If approved, construction would begin on the elementary school in November 2019

**PROS:** 1) Our current four buildings are too costly to maintain and operate based on current and projected enrollment.

2) We have four of everything, e.g. cafeterias, libraries, parking lots, roofs, HVAC systems; all housed under 260,000 square feet that is at least 50 years old, when we need about half of that space. It simply costs too much to run the district in this way.

3) Yearly cost savings are estimated at \$1.1 million per year, once the PK-12 centralized campus is completed.

4) The economic environment is right to move forward now, with low interest rates, reduced unemployment and low inflation.

5) Academically, our current learning spaces are inflexible and not conducive to individualized student centered teaching techniques.

6) A strong, modern, and progressive public school system is the bedrock of any community. This investment will help to attract and maintain district employee talent, businesses and new and current Oberlin residents.

**CONS:** 1) New buildings do not mean better education. Twenty-first century learning is much more about offering differentiated and personalized learning than flexible spaces.

2) Many feel the school district has not spent our money wisely. Top-heavy administration, low state report card grades, and lack of building upkeep are key concerns.

3) Taxes are already high. Property taxes are average, but Oberlin's 2% school income tax is tied for the highest in the state.

4) A 2016 study shows that Oberlin is becoming a less economically and racially diverse community as it becomes a costlier place to live.

5) With enrollment dwindling and predicted to decline further, we may soon be too small to remain independent.

6) Consolidation and renovation have not been adequately explored. Other districts have provided personalized, cost-effective renovations without placing an undue burden on the taxpayer.

Visit [www.oberlinconcernedcitizens.org](http://www.oberlinconcernedcitizens.org) for more information.