



## CAN'T FLOP HIMSELF

THE CAVS' DONOVAN MITCHELL IS FRUSTRATED BY HIS LOW NUMBER OF FREE THROWS THIS POSTSEASON. "I'M JUST NOT GETTING THE CALLS. I DON'T FLOP. MAYBE THAT'S WHY." **C1**



### JUSTICE CENTER

## Not everyone is buying into the county's list of improvements

*Prosecutor Mike O'Malley calls the tally of \$77M spent over the past decade "absurd."*

**Kaitlin Durbin** *kdurbin@cleveland.com*

As judges push for upgrades to what they describe as a long-neglected courthouse, county officials have responded by compiling a roughly \$77 million tally of improvements they say have been made to the Justice Center and court facilities over the past decade.

Records show, however, that nearly half of that money was spent outside the Justice Center itself, and only a small share went to the Courts Tower at the center of the dispute.

The list, part of an internal memo dated March 23, was prepared just days after Common Pleas Court's Administrative and Presiding Judge Michael P. Shaughnessy hired outside counsel to pursue "a prompt resolution to the state of the court's facilities."

The judges were worried that the county may spend too much money on a new billion-dollar jail and leave nothing to fix up court facilities in the Justice Center, as has been promised. The building is 50 years old and has long been plagued by a leaking roof, unreliable elevators and outdated fixtures.

County spokeswoman Jennifer Ciaccia told [cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com)/The Plain Dealer that the list was created "in support of communication with Justice Center stakeholders" for planning improvements. It summarizes "major project investments made to sustain the facility" totaling about \$76.8 million through March 20 and notes that another \$18.4 million in projects are in the design phase.

The memo also includes a 2024 capital improvement plan for updating court facilities over the next 10 years, including tearing down the jail towers once a new jail is built in Garfield Heights.

But Prosecutor Michael O'Malley, whose office is based in the courts tower, took one look at the list and called it "absurd." He accused the county of "scrambling to justify the lack of maintenance" over the years in the face of a potential lawsuit by counting work done to the old courthouse and Courthouse Square, where some other court functions are housed, and the Huntington Park Garage, where some court employees and visitors park.

**SEE JUSTICE CENTER, A2**



**The Courts Tower at the Justice Center downtown is a 26-story building that houses criminal courtrooms, the prosecutor's office, clerk of courts and municipal courts.**  
*The Plain Dealer*

### MAY ELECTION OHIO

## Voters largely reject schools' tax proposals

*Whether the request was for income tax or property tax, the thumbs-down from voters was widespread.*

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COLUMBUS — Voters rejected more than two-thirds of local school district tax requests in Tuesday's election — at a time of \$5 a gallon gas, record-high property taxes and other economic uncertainties.

Of the 66 tax questions, voters rejected 42. They passed 24. In the wake of those defeats, many districts likely will go before voters again, a leader of the Ohio School Boards Association said.

About a third of Ohio's school districts use income taxes. They're usually located in agricultural areas where residents are land rich but earn moderate incomes. Income taxes are seen as fairer to the community than property taxes.

But this year's primary election saw numerous suburban districts — such as Wadsworth and Parma — request income taxes to diversify revenues at a time when supporters of a proposed constitutional amendment to eliminate property taxes are gathering signatures.

Such an amendment would leave districts reeling. Ohioans pay more \$13 billion a year in property taxes to districts.

There were 31 school income tax issues before voters. Only seven were approved, and among those that passed, two were renewals of income taxes the communities had previously paid to the districts.

Tom Hosler, CEO of the Ohio School Boards Association, said that the high rejection rate was in part due to the economy and how Ohioans feel financially.

It also had to do with the assortment of tax questions on ballots. Just 11 of the tax questions asked voters to renew operating levies. Forty-one issues were new operating taxes.

Renewal levies pass at high rates because voters are used to paying the taxes. But the number of renewal levies was low this election, he said.

As Ohioans are struggling with the cost of a gallon of gas and milk, school districts are also experiencing sticker shock. Boards of education will begin to discuss whether to ask the public again in November for more taxes. November's election could be more successful since it's a gubernatorial election with higher turnout, Hosler said.

Other districts will begin to make steep cuts or opt for a combination of cuts and asking for more money in the future, he said.

Cuts may be in extracurriculars and supplemental programs.

"Those unfortunately are the kinds of things that will be discussed," Hosler said. "You can't cut third grade."

Some districts will have to reduce personnel. Columbus and Cleveland are each hoping to save \$50 million a year with layoffs that go into effect at the end of the school year.

Although most income tax requests failed at the polls, voters will likely see them again. Voters approved an income tax in Otsego Local School District in Wood County. It was the second time the district had placed the issue on the ballot. The first time it failed by about two dozen votes, Hosler said.

In 1991, agricultural and residential property owners paid less than half—47.5% — of the property taxes that went to schools. In 2024, it was 67.9%.

"The partnership between local (schools) and the state continues to become more and more broken," Hosler said. "The result is the family that lives across the street from the local school is feeling pressure."

### ANTISEMITISM IN OHIO

## Incidents are down nearly 50% in 2025, report finds

*Though the numbers recorded by the Anti-Defamation League are in decline, the severity of antisemitic incidents is rising.*

**Mary Frances McGowan** *mmcgowan@cleveland.com*

Antisemitic incidents in Ohio fell by nearly half last year, part of a broader regional trend that the Anti-Defamation League is attributing to sustained engagement with campus administrators, local law enforcement and community organizations.

Ohio recorded 117 antisemitic incidents in 2025, down from 233 in 2024 — a 49.8% decrease — according to the ADL's annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents released Wednesday. In Cleveland, incidents fell from 37 in 2024 to eight last year.

The decline reflects how far the region has come since the immediate aftermath



**The Anti-Defamation League counted 6,274 antisemitic incidents across the country in 2025, an average of 17 per day.**  
*Associated Press*

of the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel, which triggered a sharp spike in incidents, Kelly Fishman, regional director for the ADL's Ohio River Valley office, said.

"As we've moved out further away from Oct. 7, we saw that huge spike in incidents

right after the conflict between Hamas and Israel began," Fishman told [cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com).

"Since then, we've definitely seen a decrease in that activity."

Even though overall numbers fell, Fishman cautioned that the severity of incidents is rising. Ohio recorded two antisemitic assaults in 2025, up from zero the prior year.

"A lot of the conversation around our incidents is how what we're seeing online is also manifesting in real life," she said.

"When people see hateful ideas online, we're starting to see the likelihood that they will act on those ideas. So even though the incidents are fewer this year, the severity of the incidents is higher."

### CAMPUS SAFETY

Fishman said campus protests in the wake of Oct. 7 frequently featured intense antisemitic language but that universities have since worked with ADL and partner organizations to improve campus safety.

**SEE ANTISEMITIC VIOLENCE, A2**

