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Ohio Taxpayers Association May File Suit to Put Halt To Medina Fiber Project Group Says County Plan Would Saddle Taxpayers With Debt for Decades

Columbus, Ohio - The **Ohio Taxpayers Association (OTA)**, Ohio's only statewide fiscal watchdog organization, today announced that it may file suit against Medina County to stop them from incurring over \$8 million in debt to build a taxpayer owned broadband system. The project, known as the Medina County Fiber Optic Plan, is expected to be approved by County Commissioners in the near future.

"These government operated broadband systems have been huge financial failures all across the country," said Scott A. Pullins, Chairman of the **OTA**. "Politicians running for office, like Medina County Commissioner Sharon Ray, love to embrace these trendy, but poorly thought out plans for economic development. But in the end, taxpayers end up holding the bag when these projects fall apart."

"While the politicians that dream up these plans move on to higher office, taxpayers are stuck with decades of debt to pay off," continued Pullins. "In fact, this project isn't even needed. The private sector in Northeastern Ohio already provides a much better and more comprehensive network for broadband services."

The **OTA** maintains that this project will duplicate infrastructure that is already in place. "Why is government, backed with our tax dollars, choosing to compete in the private sector with services that are already available and well provided," asked Pullins? "Even worse, this project won't even serve all taxpayers, rather it appears to be targeted towards a limited geographic area and a small, elite group of businesses."

OTA legal counsel believe that state law requires this proposal to go to a countywide ballot. However, so far, county officials have continued to move ahead with the project under the assumption they can sidestep a vote of the people.

The **OTA** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents Ohio taxpayers. For more info, please visit www.ohiotaxpayers.com.

