

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CUYAHOGA COUNTY CHARTER REFORM

### Objectives:

The Cuyahoga County Charter Reform proposal seeks to significantly improve the County's competitive strength and coordinated leadership. With it, the taxpayers of Cuyahoga County will have:

- Effective, accountable and focused leadership;
- Job creation and economic growth as a fundamental government purpose, thereby helping the county do a better job of creating and retaining jobs;
- An improved focus on equity for all our communities and citizens;
- Significant taxpayer savings by streamlining positions and eliminating unnecessary elected offices; and
- Collaborative leadership with Cleveland and the suburbs as we seek to attract new businesses and jobs.

### Key Elements of the Proposal:

Through Charter Reform, the new government structure will feature just two county-wide officers plus 11 part-time Council members and will thus offer more representative positions, centralized administrative functions and significant savings. Cuyahoga County government will be more open, more effective and more efficient. It will be leaner, less bureaucratic and less expensive. Streamlined responsibilities and a County Council will make it more accountable and more representative. Here's how:

- **Eliminating positions, duplication and waste – saving significant tax dollars annually.** Highlights include:
  - Eliminating the three financial positions of Treasurer, Recorder and Auditor and consolidating them under the offices of Treasurer and Fiscal Officer in the executive branch.
  - Taking the politics out of the Coroner, Sheriff and Engineer positions by no longer having them as elected officers.
- **One elected county executive instead of three commissioners.**
  - Will make leadership more efficient, more accountable and less political, allowing better, more effective focus on important issues such as economic development and health and human services.
  - Provide a single leader to collaborate with Cleveland, the suburbs, and businesses interested in locating in our County.

- **An 11-member part-time Council, from fairly-drawn districts that represent all communities.**
  - Provides separation of powers, checks and balances and public debate on important issues.
  - Provides more opportunities for diverse communities to be represented.
  - Gives Council the power to initiate legislation, approve budgets and serve as a financial watchdog.
  - Brings the county's elected representatives closer to the residents for better democracy.
  
- **Eliminate all other elected positions, except the Prosecutor and Judges.**
  - Ensures that the law enforcement branch, including the courts, will be fully independent, accountable to the people.
  
- **An advisory Economic Development Commission, with members appointed by the county Executive, city, suburbs, business and labor.**
  - Will assist the Executive and Council in crafting a vision, plan and strategy for countywide job creation and transformational economic development.
  - Ensure regional collaboration on major economic development projects by bringing a regional perspective to all major projects.
  
- **A central Human Resources Department that will:**
  - Ensure ethical, professional standards in hiring, evaluation and promotion, much as Civil Service Commissions do.
  - Undertake outreach aimed at a diverse and qualified workforce throughout the County.

In short, Charter Reform will provide Cuyahoga County with an updated, much more efficient government that is better able to compete for jobs and make our county more attractive to residents, employers and families.