

OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE
KEITH FABER



77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
ContactUs@ohioauditor.gov
800-282-0370

April 24, 2026

Via Email Only

The Honorable Chris Ronayne
Cuyahoga County Executive
The Honorable Dale Miller
Cuyahoga County Council President
2079 East 9th Street
Cleveland, OH 44115

Dear County Executive Ronayne and Council President Miller,

I am writing to you in response to a letter sent to the Auditor of State from Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael O'Malley dated April 20, 2026. In Prosecutor O'Malley's letter, he raises a concern regarding the application of ORC 153.36 to the design and construction of the Cuyahoga County Central Service Campus, which primarily consists of a county jail facility.

Prosecutor O'Malley's letter and accompanying attachments are currently under review by the Auditor of State's Special Investigations Unit. From a preliminary examination, it appears that ORC 153.36 would apply to the project and therefore, approval from the clerk of the court of common pleas, the sheriff, the probate judge, and the designee of the court of common pleas would be required before the project commences. For purposes of this letter, we will refer to that group as the "153.36 committee." To assist with our review of compliance with ORC 153.36, we would like to extend the opportunity to the County officials to present in writing the County's perspective on compliance with that statute. To that end, please provide your legal counsel's legal analysis including the following information:

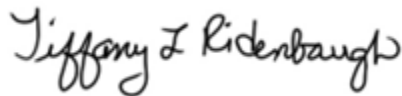
- 1) Does the County agree that ORC 153.36 requires approval from the majority of the following people: the clerk of the court of common pleas, the sheriff, the probate judge, and the designee of the court of common pleas?
- 2) What is the County's perspective on when the project commences and therefore when approval of the majority of the 153.36 committee members must be obtained?
- 3) Has the 153.36 committee been formed, and if so, has the committee approved the project?
- 4) Please identify what expenditures were made prior to the approval of the 153.36 committee.
- 5) Please identify what the progress on the project has been to date and what is left to be done to fully complete the project.

If the review by the Special Investigations Unit discloses that Cuyahoga County officials violated ORC 153.36 and caused public money to be expended illegally and in violation of Ohio law, it is possible that this office may issue, in an audit report, findings for recovery against responsible officials. A finding for recovery results in personal liability of the amount owed and any finding for recovery would be issued against officials who were responsible for the illegal expenditure at the time the expenditure was authorized.

The Auditor of State's office strongly encourages county officials to ensure that there is full compliance with all laws applicable to the project. Please provide the County's official response to our office no later than 45 days after the date of this letter.

Respectfully,

Keith Faber
Auditor of State



Tiffany Ridenbaugh, CPA, CFE, CGFM
Chief Deputy Auditor

Cc: Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael O'Malley