STATEMENT

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Policy Matters Ohio responds to the State of the State

Gov. DeWine fails to address most pressing issues facing Ohio

Gov. DeWine delivered his final State of the State address in Columbus today, touting his administration's performance and identifying policy priorities for his last year as governor. Policy Matters Ohio Executive Director Hannah Halbert released the following statement:

"Gov. DeWine ended his State of the State speech by encouraging Ohioans to believe our best days are ahead of us. That may be so, but the governor failed to lay out a road map for creating that brighter future, and avoided addressing many of the state's most pressing issues.

"The governor failed to acknowledge — let alone propose solutions to — the consequences of the harmful tax policies he has supported. Under his administration, the legislature shifted the tax code so far onto working families that the state now faces a proposed constitutional amendment to abolish property taxes. The proposal threatens to gut school budgets and funding for critical services — which are already underfunded because of the very same tax policies. The governor failed to mention this reality in his speech.

"The governor also failed to acknowledge the looming fiscal challenges brought on by the so-called 'One Big Beautiful Bill' (U.S. House Resolution 1). The governor has signed off on tax policies that leave the state ill equipped to maintain its current level of Medicaid coverage and other vital health and human services in the face of federal cuts. Ohioans rely on these programs; the governor's speech ignored them.

"Even when celebrating accomplishments, the governor could not avoid inadvertently highlighting the damage done on his watch: By rightly touting improvements made by East Cleveland schools, Gov. DeWine reminded Ohioans just last year he signed a budget that will underfund that district by $1,088,091 and underfund public schools statewide by $2.75 billion over the next two years.

"Ohioans who are struggling with affordability, access to child care and health care, and availability of good paying jobs needed more than a victory lap about some of Gov. DeWine's education and child health care accomplishments. Ohioans needed the governor to acknowledge hard facts about the state he'll leave us with. He did not."

Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.