

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Date: October 1, 2025

Contact: Greta Johnson
Director of Communications & Assistant Chief of Staff
Office of County Executive Shapiro
ExecutivePress@summitoh.net
330-643-2656

County Executive Shapiro delivers 2025 State of the County Address

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro delivered her seventh State of the County Address at the John S. Knight Center in Downtown Akron this afternoon. The annual event is sponsored by the Akron Press Club and the proceeds directly benefit scholarships for local students studying journalism and public relations.

In her speech, Executive Shapiro highlighted major progress in the Polymer Industry Cluster, including the appointment of Dr. Hans Dorfi as Executive Director and Chief Innovation Officer, and the announcement of a new facility to drive research and innovation. Other successful economic development efforts continue countywide through business retention visits and site development, and efficient institutional services like building permitting and workforce training.

The address also underscored the importance of housing affordability and stability, citing 240 homes repaired or improved through federal and state funding, and the launch of the Housing Research Collaborative, which engaged more than 200 residents and identified top community-driven priorities.

Executive Shapiro outlined investments from opioid settlement funds, including an additional \$500,000 for grassroots substance use and mental health services in partnership with Akron Community Foundation. And, the forthcoming Summit Health and Safety Innovation Fund, a \$45 million initiative in partnership with ACF, will expand long-term investments in health and safety.

Public safety advancements included the ongoing construction of the Summit Connects fiber network, enhancements at the Summit Emergency Communications Center with AI-assisted non-emergency call handling, and nearly \$3 million in state funding to modernize the County Jail's intake and booking facilities.

Executive Shapiro emphasized the County's commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency, citing the Open Finance portal and the new, consolidated Board of Elections facility that expands early voting access and streamlines election operations.

Looking ahead, she urged support for the county's proposed charter amendment, Issue 2, a responsible property tax reform measure designed to protect homeowners from sharp valuation increases while sustaining high-quality public safety services.

"Summit County is strong because its people are strong," the Executive said. "Together, we are building a resilient economy, supporting stronger communities, and providing new opportunities for our residents."

The full speech and a recording of the event are available at <https://co.summitoh.net/2025StateoftheCounty>.

###