



# Ohio Township Association

## Legislative Alert

September 18, 2020

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## Legislative Action This Week

### ***Halloween Guidance Issued***

The Ohio Department of Health has released Halloween guidance, urging all Ohioans to use caution and plan ahead for celebrating Halloween amid the pandemic. The state will leave participation in Halloween festivities to local communities, individuals, and parents. You can access the guidance [here](#).

### ***House Hearing on SB 357, Potential for Vote***

[SB 357](#), which would distribute the final round of CARES Act funding to local governments, is scheduled for an informal hearing in the House Finance Committee on Tuesday next week. There is a possibility that the bill will be voted on next week as well. The OTA will notify its members if the bill passes - stay tuned.

### ***Additional CARES Act Information***

In response to questions and concerns from our membership, the OTA has developed a [CARES Act informational packet](#) that addresses many parts of this process - all in one place. This document has also been mailed to all township fiscal officers to ensure that everyone has access to this information.

Additionally, the OTA hosted a webinar this week with Greg Beck, attorney at Baker, Dublikar, Beck, Wiley & Mathews, on "Use of CARES Act Funding." You can view a recording of that webinar [here](#).

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## Bills in Committee Next Week

### **Senate Ways and Means Committee - Tuesday, September 22nd at 10:30am**

[SB 286 TAX CREDIT](#) (SCHAFFER) - To authorize an income tax credit for volunteer firefighters who purchase firefighting-related safety or protective items.

*2nd hearing - proponent testimony; OTA position - support*

[SB 190 INCOME TAX CREDIT](#) (SCHAFFER) - To allow an income tax credit for law enforcement officials who purchase safety or protective items to be used in the course of official law enforcement activities.

*6th hearing - proponent, opponent, interested party; OTA position - support*

### **House Finance Committee - Tuesday, September 22nd at 1:00pm**

[SB 357 CORONAVIRUS FUNDS](#) (DOLAN) - To provide for the distribution of some federal coronavirus relief funding to local subdivisions and to declare an emergency.

*Informal hearing - sponsor, proponent, opponent, interested party; OTA position - support*

### **House Select Committee on Energy Policy & Oversight - Wednesday, September 23rd at 9:00am**

[HB 746 ENERGY REPEAL](#) (LANESE, GREENSPAN) - To repeal the changes made by H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to the laws governing electric service, renewable energy, and energy efficiency and the changes made to other related laws.

[HB 738 HB6 REPEAL](#) (SKINDELL, O'BRIEN) - To repeal the changes made by H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to the laws governing electric service, renewable energy, and energy efficiency and the changes made to other related laws.

3rd hearing - invited testimony

If you are interested in testifying on legislation, please contact the OTA.

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## Recently Introduced Legislation

[HB 759 VOLUNTEER PEACE OFFICER/ FIREFIGHTER STUDY COMMITTEE](#) (Rogers, Hoops) - To create the Volunteer Peace Officer and Firefighter Benefit Study Committee to examine disability and survivor benefits paid to volunteer and part-time peace officers and firefighters and their dependents.

[SB 365 REMOTE MEETINGS](#) (Fedor) - To extend the authorization for members of a public body to hold and attend meetings or hearings via electronic technology, during the period of the emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D on March 9, 2020, until the declared emergency is terminated.

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## Upcoming OTA Webinars

### **"Subgranting of CARES Act Funding"**

**Friday, September 25th 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.**

*Speaker:* Director Kim Murnieks and Stacie Massey - Office of Budget and Management

*Description:* The Ohio Township Association, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Mayors Alliance, and County Commissioners Association of Ohio invite you to join the Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM) to discuss the processes and procedures of subgranting CARES Act funds to other entities. This webinar will cover requirements under the CARES Act, how to establish a subgrant, innovative uses of CARES Act funds with other entities, and best practices for local governments looking to share resources or partner with other entities to deliver programs with CARES Act dollars.

[Register](#)

### **"First Amendment Rights of Public Employees During Election Season"**

**Wednesday, September 30th 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

*Speaker:* David A Riepenhoff - Attorney, Fishel Downey Albrecht & Riepenhoff LLP

*Description:* As the November general election draws near, commentary on political issues will increase outside of and at work. This might look like "water cooler talk," discussions on social media, or attendance at political events and rallies. This webinar will review the First Amendment rights of employees during election season, and the rights of township employers.

[Register](#)

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## OEPA Virtual Conference

Ohio EPA remains committed to assisting businesses, communities, and environmental professionals with their environmental compliance needs. With this in mind, OEPA is offering a [FREE 2020 Virtual Compliance Assistance Conference](#) that will provide daily interactive sessions focused on compliance with air, waste, and water regulations, strategically and conveniently spaced over three consecutive weeks beginning on September 21st.

This virtual conference will provide:

- Live-streamed interactive keynote sessions with Ohio EPA's Director, Laurie Stevenson and U.S. EPA Region V's Administrator, Kurt Thiede;
- Interactive regulatory presentations and panel discussions with Ohio EPA's inspectors,

- permit writers, and management;
- Opportunities to earn Continuing Education Credits;
- Opportunities to meet virtually with compliance staff for Q&A;
- Chance to converse with your peers, industry leaders, and stakeholders; and
- Much more...

There is no cost to participate in Ohio EPA's 2020 Virtual Compliance Assistance Conference. Visit the link above to look through the interactive agenda and register for the conference.

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## Ethics Commission Update

The 3rd quarter edition of the Ohio Ethics Commission newsletter "The Voice of Ethics" is now available. You can access it [here](#).

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## Federal Update

### ***Congressional Action***

The House and Senate were in session this week. The House voted on 31 bills under suspension of the rules, including the Congressional Budget Justification Transparency Act of 2020 ([H.R. 4894](#)), which requires congressional budget justifications to be posted online in a centralized, searchable database, as well as on every federal agency's website, and the Ensuring Children and Child Care Workers Are Safe Act of 2020 ([H.R. 7909](#)), which requires the Department of Health and Human Services to assist states with providing child care services safely during the COVID-19 pandemic, including authorizing \$5 million in FY 2021 for grants to provide guidance, technical assistance, and support.



Negotiations on a coronavirus stimulus measure have stalled, but the House's return this week could give a boost to talks. However, lawmakers still appear far apart on the overall cost of the measure, among other issues, and it appears unlikely a relief package will be enacted by early October when the House and Senate enter their month-long pre-election recess. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin are also in discussions regarding passage of a critical government-funding bill needed to keep federal agencies open when the new fiscal year begins on October 1st. The two have decided that this Continuing Resolution (CR) will be handled separately from the COVID-19 stimulus talks, a decision which may have removed an action-forcing deadline that could have spurred a stimulus deal. The main outstanding issue is whether the CR will last through mid-December 2020 or through early 2021, after the new Congress is sworn-in on January 3rd.

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## 2020 Census



**The Census Bureau has recently announced that it will end counting efforts on September 30th. This is the final push to make sure your community is counted accurately!**

From recent information, Ohio has a response rate of 68.5% and ranks 13th in the nation. In 2010, Ohio ranked in the top 10. Given the important role that Census plays in federal funding and congressional apportionment, it is essential Ohioans are counted.

There are currently very low response rates in the following counties: Harrison, Meigs, Morgan, Ottawa, and Vinton.

**Help spread Census 2020 information and encourage your neighbors to be counted in this last month!**

It has never been easier to respond on your own, whether online, over the phone or by mail - all without having to meet a census taker.

Learn more about these updates and ways to be counted [here](#).

[US Census Website](#)  
[Ohio Census Website](#)

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**Ohio Township Association**

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