



Ohio Township Association

Legislative Alert

September 25, 2020

Legislative Action This Week

GA Passes Final CARES Act Distribution to Local Govs

The House and Senate have disbursed the final round of CARES Act funding, previously SB 357. The Senate rolled [SB 357](#) in its entirety into [HB 614](#) for passage. As a reminder, SB 357 distributed the final \$650 million of CARES Act funding to local governments by population (rather than through the LGF formula as previous distributions had been made).

Additionally, this bill extends the deadlines previously outlined in HB 481. Townships now have until November 20th to encumber CARES Act funds (or return them to the county), until December 30th to spend funds, and until February 1st to rectify accounts with OBM. This extension applies to all CARES Act funding, including previously distributed funds through HB 481 and the Ohio Controlling Board. All other previous requirements for CARES Act funding still apply. Again, this will be the final distribution of CARES Act funding to local governments.

Both the House and Senate have now approved HB 614. The bill will become law upon the Governor's signature, as it contains an emergency clause. For more information, click [here](#).

Additional Legislative Action

In a busy legislative week, the General Assembly also finalized several other bills that may be of interest to townships:

- [HB 242](#) - This bill temporarily prohibits local governments from imposing a tax, fee, assessment, or other charge on auxiliary containers, such as plastic bags or containers. The bill contains a sunset provision of twelve months.
- [SB 163](#) - While originally a bill regarding ceremonial licenses plates, SB 163 picked up an amendment in conference committee to correct an issue related to traffic camera usage by local governments. HB 62, the transportation budget, contained a provision that reduced LGF payments to jurisdictions operating traffic cameras by amounts corresponding to fees received. The language unintentionally affected other jurisdictions by reducing the CULGF payments. This amendment addresses the issue and makes those neighboring jurisdictions whole.
- [HB 669](#) - The bill contains a number of changes affecting the sale of alcoholic beverages. For townships, the bill allows a liquor permit holder to sell on adjacent public property with permission of the trustees.

These bills have all passed the House and Senate and are pending before Governor DeWine for his signature. For more information on these bills, contact OTA Director of Governmental Affairs Marisa Myers at myers@ohiotownships.org.

Recently Introduced Legislation

[HB 762 MODIFY CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAWS](#) (Grendell, Fraizer) - To modify the campaign finance law and to declare an emergency.

[HB 763 STATE OF EMERGENCY](#) (Grendell, Stoltzfus) - To terminate the COVID-19 state of emergency in Ohio and to declare an emergency.

Upcoming OTA Webinars

"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](#)

"Auditing of CARES Act Funding"

Thursday, October 1st 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Speaker: Office of Ohio Auditor Keith Faber

Description: The Ohio Township Association, Ohio Municipal League, Ohio Mayors Alliance, and County Commissioners Association of Ohio invite you to join Ohio Auditor of State Keith Faber's office to discuss the CARES Act, accounting procedures, a review of how funds will be audited, and information on best practices and additional resources.

[Register](#)

ORIL Board Representative

The ODOT Research Initiative for Locals (ORIL) is an innovative research program under ODOT's Research Section, which focuses on research needs of local transportation agencies, such as counties, municipalities, and townships. The ORIL Board is comprised of 15 members, one of which is appointed by the Ohio Township Association. Responsibilities of the Board include the following:

- Develop and maintain the program;
- Establish strategic research focus areas;
- Select and recommend projects for funding;
- Establish Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) to oversee individual projects;
- Select researchers to conduct projects;
- Review progress of projects;
- Assess research results and implementation potential;
- Participate in quarterly Board meetings (in Columbus, OH); and
- Help to market the program.

While it is desired that the township representative hold a Civil Engineering Degree, it is not a requirement. Most important is for the appointee to have some background/experience in transportation, and an interest in transportation research.

If you or someone within your township employment is interested in serving a four year term on the ORIL Board as the OTA representative, please contact OTA Executive Director Heidi Fought via email at fought@ohiotownships.org by November 1st.

Federal Update

Congressional Action

The House and Senate were in session this week. The House voted on 57 bills under suspension of the rules, including the Improving Emergency Disease Response via Housing Act of 2020 ([H.R. 6294](#)), which requires the Housing and Urban Development Department to share data with the Health and Human Services (HHS) Department on low-income and homeless individuals at risk of contracting COVID-19, and the Helping Emergency Responders Overcome (HERO) Act ([H.R. 1646](#)), which requires HHS to collect and report data on suicide among law enforcement and emergency personnel and requires HHS and the U.S. Fire Administration to develop resources to assist with



mental health issues faced by first responders.

The House also voted on a stopgap Continuing Resolution, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act ([H.R. 8319](#)), which extends federal government funding at enacted FY2020 levels from Oct. 1st through Friday, December 11, 2020, in addition to extending the authorization of the 2015 surface transportation bill (the FAST Act) and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) through September 30, 2021, among other provisions.

President Trump said recently that he expects to nominate the late Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's replacement on Saturday this week and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said "President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate," a move that could give the court's conservatives a firm 6-3 majority. The top five finalists for the nomination, all of whom are women, reportedly include: 48-year old 7th Circuit Appeals Court Judge Amy Coney Barrett; 52-year old 11th Circuit Appeals Court Judge Barbara Lagoa; 38-year old 4th Circuit Appeals Court Judge Allison Jones Rushing; 51-year old 6th Circuit Appeals Court Judge Joan Larsen; and 45-year old Kate Todd, the White House Deputy Counsel who helps vet federal judges for President Trump.

2020 Census

United States
**Census
2020**

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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