



Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert

March 29, 2019

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Legislative Action This Week

Governor's Budget Introduced

The Governor has unveiled language for his biennial budget, [HB 166](#). HB 166 is slimmer than recent budgets and does not contain many significant policy changes for townships. However, the OTA is working on amendments for the General Assembly to consider.

All documents for the budget are available [here](#).

Transportation Budget Held

The [HB 62](#) Conference Committee met this week to no avail. The House and Senate were unable to come to an agreement regarding the biennial transportation budget. Discussions will likely continue next week. If the April 1st deadline passes, the General Assembly may need to consider alternative solutions.

OTA Meetings This Week

The OTA met with Sen. Hoagland to discuss a proposal to allow citizens to donate services to a township on a volunteer basis - such as plowing snow. Sen. Hoagland wants to promote the idea of being "good neighbors" to help townships continue to be efficient and cost effective. The OTA is looking into the proposal and providing feedback.

The OTA participated in one of Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Dorothy Pelanda's meet and greet opportunities to discuss agricultural issues that are important to townships.

Additionally, the OTA and several other local government groups met with Commissioner McClain and his staff at the Department of Taxation regarding relevant tax issues.

Statehouse Committee Updates

Conference Committee Hearings - HB 62 Conference Committee

[HB 62 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET](#) (Oelslager) - To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.

The HB 62 conference committee met this week to resolve the differences between the Senate and House proposals. Unfortunately, they were unable to agree on a final proposal.

House Committee Hearings - Economic and Workforce Development

[HB 98 LOAN FUND](#) (Jones, Cera) - To reinstate the rural industrial park loan fund and to make an appropriation.

The committee heard sponsor testimony from Reps. Cera and Jones. OTA position - interested party.

House Committee Hearings - State and Local Government

[HB 46 SPENDING DATABASE](#) (Greenspan) - To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database.

The committee heard proponent testimony from Treasurer Sprague's office, the Ohio News Media Association, and others. OTA position - interested party

House Committee Hearings - Ways and Means

[HB 76 ELECTION NOTICES](#) (Merrin) - To enact the "Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act" to modify the form of election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

The committee heard proponent testimony from Americans for Prosperity - Ohio. OTA position - opposed.

Bills in Committee Next Week

Conference Committee - TBD

[HB 62 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET](#) (Oelslager) - To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.

House Finance Subcommittees - various days and times

[HB 166 STATE BUDGET](#) (Oelslager) - To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

Finance Subcommittees continue to meet and hear testimony from various agencies and organizations on their individual budgets. The full Finance Committee will not meet.

House Ways and Means

[HB 75 PROPERTY VALUES](#) (Merrin) - To require local governments that contest property values to formally pass an authorizing resolution for each contest and to notify property owners.

3rd hearing - all testimony; OTA position - opposed

[HB 76 ELECTION NOTICES](#) (Merrin) - To enact the "Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act" to modify the form of election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

3rd hearing - all testimony; OTA position - opposed

Let us know if you are interested in testifying on any of these bills.

Bill Introductions

[HB 163 WATER AND SEWER PRACTICES](#) (Brinkman) - To create a process for withholding local government funds and state water and sewer assistance from municipal corporations that engage in certain water and sewer practices with respect to extraterritorial service.

*This bill is similar to HB 602 (Duffey, Lanese) from last GA.

[HB 166 STATE BUDGET](#) (Oelslager) - To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

Hearing Scheduled on Cemetery Grant Rules

Last week, the Ohio Department of Commerce filed rules for the Cemetery Grant Program with the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review ([JCARR](#)), a legislative body that reviews agency rules to ensure that they do not exceed statutory authority. You can view the rule package [here](#).

The public hearing for these rules in JCARR has been scheduled for **Wednesday, April 24**.

OPERS Update

The OPERS Government Relations staff have been meeting with new members of the Ohio General Assembly to familiarize them with OPERS and discuss the financial health of the system. In their meetings, they share the size and composition of their membership and provide district-specific data about the positive economic impact OPERS has on local communities through their pension benefits and retiree health care. They answer questions legislators have about the system and provide contact information, so members know who to call if additional issues come up.

The OPERS Government Relations team is pleased to serve as your liaison when you are contacted by constituents who have questions or concerns about OPERS-related issues. Please [contact them](#) whenever you need assistance in responding to your constituents or have a question about OPERS.

Federal Update



Broadband Grant Information

TFG Grants has released their "Broadband Funding Guide" that helps identify potential funding sources for broadband projects. You can view the guide [here](#).

Congressional Action

The House and Senate were in session this week. The House considered seven bills under suspension of the rules, including the Paycheck Fairness Act ([H.R. 7](#)), which would mandate tougher standards and larger penalties against employers for claims of pay discrimination.

A packed committee schedule highlights the busy week for budget and appropriations, as Trump Administration representatives traveled to Capitol Hill to discuss the President's FY 2020 budget request. The House Appropriations Committee held 25 budget hearings, including for the Departments of Energy, Education, the Interior, State, and Veterans Affairs; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; White House Office of Management and Budget; NASA; and the U.S. Forest Service. The Senate Appropriations Committee held eight budget hearings, including for the Departments of Transportation, Energy, and Education; the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission and U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission; and the Food and Drug Administration.

On Thursday, the Senate Budget Committee voted on Republicans' draft budget resolution for FY 2020. Chairman Mike Enzi (R-WY) last week released his opening bid in negotiations over budget caps that will be key in determining whether there is another federal government shutdown on October 1, 2019. Enzi's measure would let automatic cuts to defense and non-defense spending kick in on schedule while maintaining current levels of war funding that are not subject to the budget caps.

Ohio Ethics Commission Newsletter

The latest edition of the Ohio Ethics Commission's newsletter is now available. You can view the newsletter [here](#).



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