



Ohio Township Association

Legislative Alert

February 21, 2020

Legislative Action This Week

Parties Discuss an "All Ohio" Opioid Settlement

With the opioid epidemic's impact across Ohio, many local governments have filed lawsuits in various courts against the drug industry. For some time, parties to these lawsuits have been discussing an "all Ohio" joint settlement in conjunction with the State of Ohio.

It appears these negotiations are nearing an agreement, with local governments sharing a portion of the potentially multi-billion-dollar settlement. While the details of the settlement are not yet finalized, local governments heavily impacted by the opioid epidemic, including townships, could see significant funds from the settlement.

The OTA will keep you updated as negotiations are finalized and information becomes available.

Legislative Meetings

The OTA met with representatives of the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association to discuss provisions of the township omnibus bill.

Bills Recently Introduced

[SB 285 DISTRACTED DRIVING](#) (O'Brien, Kunze) - To revise the laws relative to distracted driving and the use of an electronic wireless communications device while driving.

Recent AG Opinion

[No. 2020-001](#) BZA Membership

SYLLABUS:

A person who serves as a real estate appraiser in the unclassified service with the county auditor's office, and who, pursuant to the person's job duties, is not able to abstain from appraising certain property within the county, may not serve simultaneously as a member of the board of zoning appeals for a township within the same county.

ODOT Grant Local Match

The Ohio Department of Transportation has announced they will no longer require a 10 percent local contribution for safety projects and instead, **will cover 100 percent of the project costs through the Highway Safety Improvement Program**. ODOT is also dedicating \$10 million to the Pedestrian Safety improvement Program, where investments will improve safety

for Ohioans traveling on foot or by bike in the State's urban areas.

ODOT would like to encourage local governments to apply for Highway Safety Improvement Program funding through this [link](#). Applications are accepted twice a year. The upcoming application deadline is April 30th and the following deadline will be September 30th.

ODOT Safety Sign Grant

The 2020 Ohio Township Safety Signage Grant is now accepting applications from eligible townships through Friday, June 5, 2020.

Details of the program are available [here](#). A list of townships eligible to apply is available [here](#).

NOTE: The pre-grant meeting has been replaced with three eLearning modules. The modules are available online, at no cost, and take only two hours to totally complete. The modules must be completed by each eligible township PRIOR to submitting their sign grant application. For more information on the eLearning modules, please review the following [guidance](#).

If you have any questions concerning the Township Safety Signage Grant program, please contact Debbie Cox at 614-387-7359 or Debbie.cox@dot.ohio.gov.

Trenching Safety Grants

BWC Unveils New Trenching Safety Grants and Website

BWC is launching a new \$2 million safety grant program to assist employers in purchasing equipment to protect their workers while working in trenching and excavating situations. BWC's [Trench Safety Grant program](#) provides 4-to-1 matching funds, up to \$12,000, to Ohio private and public employers covered by the State Insurance Fund who wish to purchase equipment to substantially reduce or eliminate injuries and illnesses associated with trenching and excavation.

The grant funds can assist employers in purchasing safety equipment, such as trench boxes and hydraulic shoring. Along with the grant, BWC will provide training and educational materials for employers to share with their employees on basic requirements of trench safety. Finally, BWC has launched a website, trenchsafetyohio.com, that includes links to trenching safety information and tips, training, and publications.

Natural Gas Access Forum

Solutions for Local Communities

In the third installment of the PUCO's forum series on access to natural gas, participants will hear about ways utilities, competitive suppliers, local governments, consumers, and business leaders can engage in self-help through Ohio's existing laws and regulatory framework to improve access to and the availability of natural gas at reasonable prices. Participants will learn about the mechanics of ordinance pricing, community aggregation, "home rule" alternative regulation, and reasonable arrangements.

When: March 12, 2020

Where: 180 East Broad Street, Columbus Ohio (Hearing Rooms 11-A and B)

Time: 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Federal Update

Congressional Action

The House and Senate were in recess this week. When the Senate returns the week of February 24th, the chamber will vote on the motion to proceed to the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act ([S. 3275](#)) and the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act ([S. 311](#)), bills which would make it a crime for doctors to perform abortions after 20 weeks of gestation (with exemptions in cases of rape, incest, and if a pregnant woman's life is in danger) and would penalize doctors who fail to "exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion," respectively. Both bills would require 60 votes to overcome the initial procedural hurdle.



On Wednesday, the ninth Democratic Party 2020 presidential primary debate took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, co-hosted by NBC News, MSNBC, and The Nevada Independent. Six of the remaining eight candidates faced off ahead of the Nevada Democratic caucuses on Saturday: Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), former Vice President Joe Biden, former South Bend, Indiana Mayor Pete Buttigieg, and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

2020 Census



All Your Information for the Upcoming 2020 Census

PSAs Available

The US Census Bureau has provided a selection of public service announcements intended to help educate the public. You may access them [here](#).

[US Census Website](#)

[Ohio Census Website](#)

The 2020 Census is headed your way! And it's so important that your township gets an accurate count. This section will help you get information out to your friends and neighbors to ensure residents in your area are counted. Check here for weekly information and links to important documents and resources.

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