

Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert



March 2, 2018

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Legislative Activity This Week

Tuesday, February 27

House Ways & Means

HB 488 TAX LEVIES (Hood, Becker) To modify the information conveyed in election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

Sponsors Hood and Becker provided testimony to the committee stating that current ballot language is confusing and misleading for voters. By switching from "taxable value" to "fair market value", tax payers would have a better understanding of the impact of any levy being proposed.

The OTA is concerned with this legislation. [Please click here for a synopsis prepared by Bricker & Eckler that summarizes HB 488.](#)

House Finance

HB 378 BROADBAND GRANTS (Smith, Cera) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.

A substitute bill was accepted by the committee that incorporated several changes brought forth by interested parties. The Ohio Farm Bureau testified in support of the measure.

HB 529 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (Smith) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

Ohio Office of Budget & Management Director Tim Keen presented an overview of the capital appropriations budget for the committee. There are several township projects that were included in the bill. For a complete list of projects included by county, please [click here](#).

House State & Local Government

HB 454 TOWNSHIP CEMETERY (Patterson, Arndt) To require a township to compensate the owner of certain unused cemetery lots and rights which the township reenters after lack of response from the owner.

The bill was unanimously reported by the committee to the full House for a vote.

HB 500 TOWNSHIP LAWS (Carfagna) To make various changes to township law.

Sponsor Carfagna provided a brief overview of the legislation for the committee. Several committee members raised questions about particular items in the bill including: levying an entertainment tax, creating a new levy purpose, and zoning amendments.

Senate Government Oversight & Reform

SB 239 REGIONAL COUNCILS (Dolan) To modify the law concerning regional councils of governments.

No testimony was presented.

Senate Finance

HB 168 MODIFY CEMETERY LAW (Stein) To modify duties of the Division of Real Estate in the Department of Commerce regarding cemetery registration, to specify cemetery owners must reasonably maintain cemeteries, to establish the Cemetery Grant Program, to allow the Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors to review and vote upon certain license suspensions by telephone, to make various other changes to the embalmers, funeral directors, and crematory licensing laws, and to make an appropriation.

The bill was unanimously reported by the committee to the full Senate for a vote.

HB 251 INVESTMENTS (Greenspan) To increase from five to ten years the maturity period of other political subdivision's bonds and obligations eligible for investment of a subdivision's interim moneys, a county's inactive moneys, and money in the county public library fund.

The bill was unanimously reported by the committee to the full Senate for a vote.

SB 266 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (Oelslager) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

Ohio Office of Budget & Management Director Tim Keen presented an overview of the capital appropriations budget for the committee. There are several township projects that were included in the bill. For a complete list of projects included by county, please [click here](#).

House Government Accountability & Oversight

HB 342 TAX LEVIES (Merrin) To permit local tax-related proposals to appear only on general and primary election ballots and not on an August special election ballot and to modify the information conveyed in election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

Rep. Reineke offered a technical amendment, which was accepted by the committee, correcting typos and other language issues.

ODOT LPA Advisory Meeting

Rep. Blessing - annexation

Rep. Brenner - regulation of massage establishments

Rep. Lang - HB 371 and property taxation

Wednesday, February 28

Passed in the House

HB 415 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS (Greenspan, Ryan) To allocate one-half of any surplus revenue to a new Local Government Road Improvement Fund, from which money will be distributed directly to local governments to fund road improvements.

The House, by a vote of 73-13, sent the measure to the Senate for consideration. To see how your legislator voted on this bill, please [click here](#).

HB 422 WATER SEWER ACQUISITIONS (Ginter, Rogers) To govern acquisitions of municipal water-works and sewage disposal system companies by certain larger nonmunicipal water-works or sewage disposal system companies.

The House voted 93-1, with Rep. Kelly voting in the negative, to support the measure and send it to the Senate for consideration.

House Finance

HB 378 BROADBAND GRANTS (Smith, Cera) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.

No testimony was presented.

HB 529 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (Smith) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

Several witnesses testified in support of the provisions in the bill.

ODOT Access 2045 Steering Committee

Friday, March 2

Sen. Burke's office - annexation

Kasich Declares State of Emergency in 17 Counties

Last Saturday, Governor Kasich issued an emergency declaration in the face of flooding - particularly along the Ohio River. Counties affected by the proclamation include: Adams, Athens, Belmont, Brown, Clermont, Columbiana, Gallia, Hamilton, Hocking, Jackson, Jefferson,

Lawrence, Monroe, Meigs, Muskingum, Scioto and Washington.

Following the Kasich order, the EMA transitioned from assessment and monitoring to partial activation and the state's Joint Information Center was opened. That followed Ohio National Guard deployments to help install flood gates and a flood wall in Scioto County.

Recently Introduced Legislation

[HB 529 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS](#) (Ryan) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

[HB 530 LODGING TAX](#) (Hambley, Arndt) To authorize local elected officers that have levied a hotel lodging excise tax, or a designee of such officers to simultaneously hold the position of officer or member of the board of trustees of a convention and visitors' bureau without constituting incompatible offices.

[SB 266 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS](#) (Oelslager) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

[SB 268 THEFT IN OFFICE](#) (Wilson) To expand the increased penalties for theft in office based on the amount of property or services stolen and to include as restitution certain audit costs of the entity that suffered the loss involved in the offense.

[SB 269 ROAD REPAIRS](#) (Yuko) To make supplemental appropriations in order to provide political subdivisions with funding for road maintenance repairs.

Legislative Committee Schedule For Next Week

Tuesday, March 6

Senate Public Utilities (Ch. Beagle), Finance Hearing Rm., 9:30 a.m.

[HB 478 WIRELESS SERVICES](#) (Smith, LaTourette) To modify the law regarding wireless service and the placement of small cell wireless facilities in the public way.

1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony

House Finance (Ch. Smith), Rm. 313, 10 a.m.

[HB 529 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS](#) (Ryan) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote

[HB 378 BROADBAND GRANTS](#) (Smith, Cera) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.

7th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments, substitute & vote

Senate Finance (Ch. Oelslager), Finance Hearing Rm., 2:30 p.m.

[SB 266 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS](#) (Oelslager) To make capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects and to make reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2020.

3rd Hearing-Opponent testimony

[SB 225 BROADBAND GRANTS](#) (Schiavoni, Eklund) To create the Ohio Broadband Development Grant Program and to make an appropriation.

1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony

Wednesday, March 7

Senate Government Oversight & Reform (Ch. Coley), Finance Hearing Rm., 9:45 a.m.

[HB 312 CREDIT CARD USE](#) (Schuring, Greenspan) To regulate the use of credit cards and debit cards by political subdivisions.

2nd Hearing-Proponent testimony-Possible amendments

SB 239 REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT (Dolan) To modify law governing regional councils of government and to require reporting with the Auditor of State.

4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments

House Aging & Long Term Care (Ch. Arndt), Rm. 122, 3:30 p.m.

HB 486 EMS WORKERS (Antonio) To specify that emergency medical services workers are public safety officers under the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.

1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony



**Department of
Job and Family Services**

Mandatory Electronic Filing to Begin for Ohio Unemployment Insurance Program

Two important changes are on the horizon for the Ohio Unemployment Insurance program. Please see below for details regarding the upcoming Mandatory Electronic Filing Requirement and the Temporary Taxable Wage Base Increase.

Quarterly Reports Must be Filed Online

Most employers and third-party administrators already file their quarterly state unemployment tax reports online. [Those that don't must begin doing so with the first quarter 2018 reports, which are due by April 30, 2018.](#)

The reports can be filed either through the Employer Resource Information Center (ERIC) at eric.ohio.gov or the Ohio Business Gateway at business.ohio.gov. ERIC allows employers and third-party administrators to manage all their business related to unemployment contributions online, including registering new businesses, filing quarterly reports and making tax payments. The Gateway allows Ohio employers to pay their unemployment contributions, as well as other state taxes, online.

Taxable Wage Base to Increase Temporarily in 2018 and 2019

In December 2016, legislation was passed to help ensure the future solvency of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. This legislation increases the taxable wage base for the 2018 and 2019 calendar years from \$9,000 to \$9,500. This means effective first quarter 2018 employers will pay state unemployment taxes on the first \$9,500 in actual (not prorated) wages paid to each of their covered employees. Payments for the first quarter of 2018 will be due April 30th.

If you have questions, please call the Contribution Section at 614.466.2319.

Recent Attorney General Opinion

[2018-004 9-1-1 Levy](#)

Syllabus:

A board of county commissioners may levy a tax in excess of the ten-mill limitation pursuant to R.C. 5705.19(BB) to pay the costs of operating a 9-1-1 system that has already been established.



Federal Update

The House and Senate were in session this week. The House considered eight bills under suspension of the rules. Congress will continue discussions this week on a FY 2018 spending package that now includes Democratic demands for extra money to



counter Russian election meddling, tighter gun-sale controls, as well as protecting the "Dreamers" from deportation. The longer list of hot-button policy issues confronts appropriators as they try to craft a spending package for the balance of the current fiscal year in line with the budget agreement reached earlier this month. Stopgap funding runs only through Friday, March 23.

NATaT Fly-in

The 2018 National Association of Towns & Townships (NATaT) Legislative Fly-in is scheduled for Wednesday, May 9 & Thursday, May 10. Registration will begin in early afternoon of May 9, a forum will be held that afternoon, and then a reception for attendees will be held in the early evening. A dinner for all Ohio attendees will take place Wednesday evening. Legislative meetings will be scheduled on Thursday morning and early afternoon. *(Actual schedule of events yet to be finalized.)* The conference hotel is the Grand Hyatt in Washington, DC and room rate is \$355 a night. Registration fee for the event is \$179. For more information and the [registration form, please click here](#).

2018 Township Safety Sign Grants *(list updated)* ***Is your township one of the lucky ones?***

The Township Safety Sign Grant Program is now accepting applications for 2018. Townships who are eligible to apply for the grant have been contacted in various ways, including a direct mailing of materials to notify them of eligibility to apply for the grant.

The [list of eligible townships is available by clicking here](#).

If your township is listed, you may view the application on ODOT's website or by [clicking here](#). The application for 2018 is due Friday, June 8, 2018. Applicants will be notified in mid-July on their application's status.

Background about the program:

This grant program provides up to \$50,000 per township in safety sign materials (signs, posts and hardware) for townships which have been determined to:

- Have a greater than average crash rating across their entire township based on their township's crash history over the previous five years and
- Not previously received funding under this grant program
- The top 200 townships meeting the criteria are invited to apply for the FY 2018 funding cycle.

All sign grant applicants must attend a pre-grant meeting that ODOT will hold on March 28 or April 12 at ODOT central office.

If you have questions concerning the grant application process, the mandatory pre-grant meetings or the grant in general, please contact Victoria Beale, Township Safety Sign Grant Program Manager, at 614.466.3129 or victoria.beale@dot.ohio.gov.



LTAP Requesting Your Participation in Survey

The Center for Local Aid Support (CLAS) provides national leadership in the advancement of training, technical assistance, and innovation within Local, Tribal, and Federal Land Management Agency transportation networks. The Center collaborates with a diverse mix of partners in the delivery of those services.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Center for Local Aid Support, invites you to participate in a Local Agency Training and Technical Assistance Needs Assessment. Local agencies own seventy-six percent of the US road network. In this ownership role, many face challenges in maintaining and operating their network, including the need to find and retain a

skilled workforce. For agencies with limited budgets, looming retirements, and the need to stay current and embrace new construction technologies, it may be difficult to maintain a skilled workforce.

FHWA is currently revisiting their strategic plan for this program. The strategic plan describes general and long-term goals the program aims to achieve, what actions FHWA and the LTAP Centers will take to realize those goals, and how entities will deal with challenges and risks that may hinder achieving results.

Key to setting goals in the new strategic plan, will be your input on your workforce needs. The survey results will be a foundational document that informs the new strategic plan.

Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Responses will not be identified by individual. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact [Andy Byra](#) or by phone at 720.963.3522.

Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start the survey now by clicking on the link below.

[Local Agency Training & Technical Assistance Needs Assessment Survey](#)



Census Bureau to Provide Informational Sessions on LUCA

Below please find the list of final Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Technical Trainings to be held in Ohio. The trainings are for the different methods by which a government unit can conduct their LUCA review so those interested should note the method that will be covered in each session.

Schedule & Locations

Wednesday, March 28
111 Liberty Street
Columbus, OH 43215
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Digital/GUPS

Thursday, March 29
541 Ledbetter Road
Xenia, OH 45385
1:00-4:00 p.m.
Paper

Thursday, March 29
69 Greene Street
Xenia, OH 45385
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Digital/GUPS

Friday, March 30
315 Madison Street
Port Clinton, OH 43452
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Paper



For more information, [please click here](#) or contact [Rose Simmons](#), Partnership Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau - Philadelphia Region at 215.717.1800.

Manufactured Homes Program Update

With the recent flooding in the state, all park owners should be aware:

- If you are located in a 100-year floodplain and you suffer a flood event, you must contact the Division of Industrial Compliance (DIC) and your local board of health within two days of the occurrence.
- You may contact DIC at 614.644.2223, or Michelle Grago of the division's building department at 614.728.9104 and ask to report a flooded manufactured home park.
- Your local board of health will then inspect the park, in accordance with R.C. §4781.33.

Please check with your floodplain administrator or the [Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water Resources - Floodplain Management Program](#) if you have any questions about your floodplain status.

Please continue reaching out to the Department of Commerce with any questions or feedback. Their goal is to continually update stakeholders with answers to frequently asked questions, pertinent details regarding the program, and deadlines regarding applications and renewals.

Contacts:

Installers

Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board
614.644.3495 or Carol.Ross@com.state.oh.us

Inspectors

Board of Building Standards
614.644.2613 or Michael.Lane@com.state.oh.us

Installation Inspection/Seal Reports

Bureau of Building Code Compliance
614.728.9104 or Michelle.Grago@com.state.oh.us

Parks (including park complaints)

Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board
614.752.7127 or Shamikka.Brookins@com.state.oh.us

Dispute Resolution

Division of Industrial Compliance Legal Section
614.644.3297 or Aaron.Johnston@com.state.oh.us

Ohio Township Association

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