

# Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert



**September 8, 2017**

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## Legislative Happenings This Week

### Tuesday, September 5

#### Meeting with Legislator

**[HB 281 RESIDENTIAL BROADBAND EXPANSION](#)** (Carfagna) - To establish the residential broadband expansion program within the Development Services Agency to award matching grants for last mile broadband expansion in municipal corporations and townships and to make an appropriation.

*The OTA participated in a stakeholders meeting with Sponsor Carfagna and other associations including the County Commissioners Association, Municipal League, Cable Communications Association, Telecommunications Association, AMP Ohio, Farm Bureau, Connect Ohio and several others. Sponsor Carfagna explained that his intention behind the proposed legislation is to connect those that do not have access to broadband to the service. He stated that he would like municipalities and townships to use video service provider (formerly called cable franchising) fees as the source of revenue for match funds but is willing to remove the limitation to encourage all communities, even those without the fees, to apply for the funds to secure broadband access to all Ohioans. Stakeholders discussed possible changes to the legislation and Sponsor Carfagna stated that he will review the list of requested changes, work with the Legislative Service Commission on a substitute bill and will share with stakeholders when completed.*

### Wednesday, September 6

#### Senate Ways & Means Committee

**[HB 69 TIF DISTRICTS](#)** (Cupp) To require reimbursement of certain township fire and emergency medical service levy revenue forgone because of the creation of a municipal tax increment financing district.

*Sponsor Cupp provided testimony during the first hearing in the Senate. Several committee members raised questions about the legislation, specifically about the number of entities impacted by the proposed legislation.*

#### Senate Finance Committee

**[HB 54 REVENUE OBLIGATIONS](#)** (Blessing, Gavarone) To authorize the Treasurer of State to issue revenue obligations of the state for the purpose of making loans to qualifying public entities for their acquisition of permanent improvements through the Treasurer of State's purchase of public obligations of those qualifying entities.

*Sponsors Gavarone and Blessing said the bill, which overwhelmingly passed the House, would allow the state treasurer's office to create a bond bank that issues bonds and then loans the money to local governments. Furthermore, the bill would benefit local governments by lowering borrowing costs through economies of scale, reduced administrative burden, and more efficient capital market access, as smaller localities with smaller bond issuances or less frequent bond issuances, would save time and money by utilizing bond banks.*

**[SB 112 INFRASTRUCTURE FUND](#)** (Schiavoni) To establish the green infrastructure fund and to make an appropriation.

*At the first hearing, Sponsor Schiavoni said the bill would provide \$10 million per year in funding for dam removal and other large-scale green infrastructure projects. The state has 362 dams currently considered high-hazard by the American Society of Civil Engineers. He said the funding would be available to federal, state, municipal and other government agencies, as well as environmental non-profits and universities. It would be administered by the Ohio Public Works Commission, with the Ohio EPA helping with the review and grading of applications.*

**[SJR 4 WATER SEWER BONDS](#)** (Schiavoni) Proposing to enact Section 2t of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to permit the issuance of general obligation bonds to fund sewer and water capital improvements.

*Sponsor Schiavoni said the resolution would allow the state to issue up to \$100 million per fiscal year over a decade for sewer and water capital improvements, without raising taxes and help local governments that are struggling to keep up with upgrading water and sewer lines.*

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## Legislative Committee for Next Week (9/11-9/15)

### Tuesday, September 12

**[Senate Finance](#)** (Ch. Oelslager), Finance Hearing Rm., 1:30 p.m.

**[HB 54 REVENUE OBLIGATIONS](#)** (Blessing, Gavarone) To authorize the Treasurer of State to issue revenue obligations of the state for the purpose of making loans to qualifying public entities for their acquisition of permanent improvements through the Treasurer of State's purchase of public obligations of those qualifying entities.

*2nd Hearing-Proponent testimony*

### Wednesday, September 13

**[House Insurance](#)** (Ch. Brinkman), Rm. 116, 10 a.m.

**[HB 268 WORKERS COMPENSATION](#)** (Henne) To make changes to the Workers' Compensation Law with respect to self-insuring employers.

*1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony*

**[HB 269 WORKERS COMPENSATION](#)** (Henne) To rename the entities who carry out workers' compensation functions in this state, to require the Administrator of Worker Safety and Rehabilitation to develop incentives for employers to participate in safety consultations and loss prevention programs, to require an employee who is receiving temporary total disability compensation to comply with a return to work plan, and to make changes with respect to compensation for permanent total disability and death benefits.

*1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony*

**[House Civil Justice](#)** (Ch. Butler), Rm. 122, 2:30 p.m. or after session

**[HB 267 POLITICAL SUBDIVISION LIABILITY](#)** (Ingram) To eliminate certain defenses to political subdivision liability for an employee's negligent operation of a motor vehicle and to reduce damages recoverable against a political subdivision in such actions by the contributory fault of the plaintiff or other parties.

*1st Hearing-Sponsor testimony*

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## Does Your Township Have An Agritourism Operation?

Last year, the Ohio General Assembly passed legislation pertaining to agritourism operations in Ohio (SB 75, 131st GA). Among other things, the new law defines agritourism, states a county or township may regulate certain factors pertaining to agritourism and addressed immunity of said operations in certain circumstances. The bill went into effect in August 2016. The OTA is looking for feedback from townships that have zoning and have an agritourism operation in their township. Do you have any issues? If you do, please contact the State Association at 614.863.0045.

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## Federal Legislative Update



### **Congressional Activity**

The U.S. House and Senate were in session this week. The House took up the SELF DRIVE Act (H.R. 3388), which would designate the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as the federal agency responsible for regulating self-driving car safety and would allow NHTSA regulations to preempt all state and local laws in this area. The Senate voted on the \$696 billion FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R. 2810), which the House passed on July 14 by a vote of 344-81. The Senate HELP Committee held hearings with Governors, State Insurance Commissioners, and other healthcare stakeholders to discuss "Stabilizing Premiums and Helping Individuals in the Individual Marketplace for 2018."

### **Lawmakers face a long list of must-pass bills which must be passed by September 30**

Congress will be very busy this month, as they are faced with a long list of bills that must be passed. These include: a Continuing Resolution (CR) to avoid a government shutdown and temporarily fund the federal government through mid-December; extending the government's borrowing authority by raising the debt ceiling to avoid a default on federal obligations; short-term extensions of programs with authorizations that expire on Sept. 30, including the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) power to collect ticket and fuel taxes to operate its air-traffic-control and safety programs; the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); the EB-5 regional center foreign-investors visa program; and vocational-education grants under the Carl Perkins Act of 2006. Passage of the FY 2018 Budget Resolution is also expected in September, which will be used to pass tax reform under the rules of reconciliation, with only 51 votes needed in the Senate.

### **White House Briefs State, Local Officials on Trump's Infrastructure Plan**

On August 30, the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs held a meeting with around 150 state, local, and tribal leaders to provide an update on the Trump Administration's draft guiding principles for infrastructure and hear input from the local officials. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, OMB Director Mick Mulvaney, Special Assistant to the President for Infrastructure D.J. Gribbin, and Council on Environmental Quality infrastructure point person Alex Hergott were present at the meeting. Mulvaney said the legislation will likely consist of three major components, starting with an emphasis on providing money for projects that already have some level of local or private funding. The goal is to use \$200 billion in federal funding to leverage about \$1 trillion worth of overall infrastructure investment. To do that, the Administration will prioritize federal funding for projects that already have significant revenue secured, either from local sources or the private sector. The second piece of Trump's infrastructure bill will focus on rural areas, as the White House recognizes that rural projects may not always be good candidates for the private financing model. The rest of the money in the proposal will be funneled towards the "transformative stuff," such as new ways of building roads, tunnels and bridges, Mulvaney said.

### **EPA and Corps to Host Ten Hearings on WOTUS Rule Rewrite**

On August 28, the EPA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that they will be holding ten teleconferences "to hear from stakeholders their recommendations to revise the definition of 'Waters of the United States' (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act (CWA)." Nine of the teleconferences will be tailored to a specific sector, i.e., agriculture (row crop, livestock, silviculture); conservation (hunters and anglers); small entities (small businesses, small organizations, small jurisdictions); construction and transportation; environment and public advocacy (including health and environmental justice); mining; industry (energy, chemical, oil/gas); scientific organizations and academia; and stormwater, wastewater management, and drinking water agencies. One of the teleconferences will be open to the public at large. The teleconferences will run throughout the fall on Tuesdays from 1-3:00 p.m., beginning on Sept. 19. In addition, the agencies will hold an in-person meeting with small entities on Oct. 23 from 9-11:00 a.m. in Washington, DC and will accept written recommendations from any member of the public on or before Nov. 28.

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## **OPERS & Altering the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)**

The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) is considering changes to the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) provided to retirees and they want to hear from you!

If you are an OPERS retiree, you should receive a survey that includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. While the survey asks for replies by Sept. 15, OPERS will accept and tabulate every survey received. If you don't receive a survey by Sept. 5, contact OPERS and a new survey will be sent to you.

On the [OPERS website](#) is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) from OPERS retirees about the COLA. You can find the FAQs by clicking [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact OPERS at 1.800.222.PERS(7377) between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.



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## Registration is Now Open for the Ohio Electronic Records Commission's (OhioERC) 2017 Fall Workshop

### *"To Scan or Not to Scan: That is the Question!"*

This FREE workshop will investigate the pros and cons of scanning various types of records, as well as demonstrate a new feasibility tool developed by the OhioERC for evaluating records for digitization. Following the presentation, there will be 4 session rotations that will allow attendees to take a fun, hands-on, small group, deeper dive into uncovering the hidden costs and variables before, during, and after digitizing, as well as utilizing the feasibility tool and touring the Delaware County Records Center and Archives reformatting operations.

Again, this workshop is free to attend, plus a travel stipend for mileage is being sponsored by partner organizations.

**Date:** Friday, October 6, 2017

**Time:** 9:00-11:30 a.m. OR 1:00-3:30 p.m.

**Location:** Delaware, Ohio

*\*Seating is limited to 50 per session, so register early.*

For more details, the agenda, physical location, and travel stipend information, please visit <http://ohioerc.org/>. To register, please click [here](#).

**Questions can be directed to:**

[OhioERC@ohiohistory.org](mailto:OhioERC@ohiohistory.org)

Nathan Owens, MLIS Records Manager  
Office of Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine

Phone: 614-728-5462

[nathan.owens@ohioattorneygeneral.gov](mailto:nathan.owens@ohioattorneygeneral.gov)

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## U.S. Census Bureau to Offer Free Webinars

Looking to enhance your data skills? This fall the Census Bureau is offering a series of free webinars about how to access and utilize Census Bureau statistics. See the list of courses below and register using the link provided. Registration is limited and will be available on a first-come first-served basis.

### ***Making Sense of the American Community Survey***

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing survey that generates estimates on social, economic, housing, and demographic topics. Data users can access these estimates down to neighborhood level (tract and block group) using the American FactFinder. This presentation will cover background information about the ACS, an explanation of the ACS datasets and topics, and a demonstration of accessing data using American FactFinder.

Thursday, September 14, 2017

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

To register, please [click here](#).

**Your Business by The Numbers: Census Business Builder App**

Find out how the Census Bureau measures key information about businesses and industries in this overview of the Economic Census and other economic programs. You will learn how to access statistics on the characteristics of business owners, the number of businesses in a given industry, sales, receipts, payroll, and much more using our new application: Census Business Builder. This training is designed for business people interested in growing their business, raising their awareness of the local community and local competition, researching site locations, among many other uses.

Thursday, September 14, 2017

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

To register, please [click here](#).

**Data on a Deadline: Quick Data Tools & Interactive Maps**

Looking for statistics at your fingertips? Learn how to use a variety of data access tools available online at census.gov that can quickly provide a snapshot of you community. During this training you will learn about U.S. Census Bureau programs and products through live exercises and instruction using tools such as QuickFacts, Census Explorer, American FactFinder, and more.

Friday, September 15, 2017

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

To register, please [click here](#).

**Making Sense of the American Community Survey: New Estimates Release**

The American Community Survey (ACS) is an ongoing survey that generates estimates on social, economic, housing, and demographic topics. Data users can access these estimates down to neighborhood level (tract and block group) using the American FactFinder. This presentation will cover background information about the ACS, an explanation of the ACS datasets and topics, and a demonstration of accessing data using American FactFinder.

Tuesday, September 19, 2017

1:00 p.m.

To register, please [click here](#).

**Data on a Deadline: Quick Access Tools and Reports**

Looking for statistics at your fingertips? Learn how to use a variety of data access tools available online at census.gov that can quickly provide a snapshot of you community. During this training you will learn about U.S. Census Bureau programs and products through live exercises and instruction using tools such as QuickFacts, Easy Stats, Community Facts (AFF), Voting Hot Reports, Census Business Builder, QWI and more.

Tuesday, September 26, 2017

1:00 p.m.

To register, please [click here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact:

Data Dissemination Branch

[census.askdata@census.gov](mailto:census.askdata@census.gov)

U.S. Census Bureau Office 617.519.1099

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## 2016 Financial Data Released by OBM

The Ohio Office of Budget and Management's (OBM) mission is to provide policy analysis, fiscal research and financial management services to the Governor and agencies of state government, helping to ensure the proper and responsible use of state resources. As a cabinet-level agency within the executive branch of state government, OBM develops, coordinates and monitors the individual budgets of state agencies and reviews all financial transactions made with public funds.

OBM State Accounting's mission is to enable state agencies to provide the best services to their clients by providing a unified system of accounting, financial reporting, and internal control adequate to protect and account for the state of Ohio's assets and financial resources. To



**OBM**

further this mission, State Accounting has released the Detailed Transaction Listing for all political subdivisions in the state. To view the report by county, please [click here](#).

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## USDOT Tiger Grant Applications Being Accepted

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the opening of the FY 2017 round of the **TIGER grant program**. Applications are due on October 16, 2017. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) fact sheet on the program can be found [here](#) and the solicitation can be found [here](#).

For FY 2017, Congress appropriated \$500 million to USDOT - available through September 2020 - for TIGER grants. Both urban and rural projects are eligible to compete for funding with urban grant awards ranging from \$5 million to \$25 million and rural grant awards ranging from \$1 million to \$25 million. Eligible projects are capital projects that include, but are not limited to:

- \* highway or bridge projects (including bicycle and pedestrian related projects);
- \* public transportation projects;
- \* passenger and freight rail transportation projects;
- \* port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure); and
- \* intermodal projects.

The selection criteria remain fundamentally the same as previous rounds of the TIGER grant program, but the description of each criterion has been slightly updated. Additionally, the FY 2017 TIGER program will give special consideration to projects which emphasize improved access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for communities in rural areas, such as projects that improve infrastructure condition, address public health and safety, promote regional connectivity, or facilitate economic growth or competitiveness.

USDOT is hosting a series of webinars during the FY 2017 TIGER grant application process. Webinars on "How to Compete for TIGER Discretionary Grants" will be held on September 13 and September 19. To register, please visit the [TIGER Webinar Series](#) webpage.

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### Ohio Township Association

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