

Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert



November 2, 2018

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Recent Legislative Activity

Introduced in the House

HB 751 TAX DEDUCTION (Smith, T.) To authorize an income tax deduction for volunteer firefighters and exempt certain income received by volunteer firefighters from withholding requirements.

Recent Meetings

Rep. Ryan's office - noise resolutions, zoning laws

Rep. Holmes' office - cemeteries

Road Funding Coalition

Ohio National Guard, local governments and businesses - cybersecurity programs

Rep. Becker - LGF revenue, Sunday liquor sales

Senate Majority Caucus Staff (phone) - HB 500, HB 342, HB 343



PUCO Encourages Local Governments to Apply for Rail Grade Crossing Funding

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) is encouraging local highway authorities to apply for state funding for rail grade crossing upgrades. The program allows local communities to share the cost of installing safety devices with the state and railroad.

For more information, please visit the Railroad tab on [PUCO's website](#).

Federal Update

Treasury Department Releases Proposed Rule-making and Guidance for Opportunity Zones

On October 19, the Treasury Department released long-awaited proposed rule-making and guidance on tax incentives for Opportunity Zones (OZs), a new program in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act aimed at spurring investment in economically distressed areas. Trump Administration officials say the goal of the program, established by the new tax law enacted last December, is to create businesses and jobs in low-income areas and lift residents out of poverty. Currently, 8,700 opportunity zones have been set up in all 50 states. Under the program, businesses may defer taxes on capital gains by investing those gains into Qualified Opportunity Funds. Those funds



must hold at least 90 percent of its assets in qualified Opportunity Zone property. Under the rules, the investments are open to individuals, corporations, partnerships and real estate investment trusts. Participants can take their profits from unrelated investments and plow them into an opportunity zone fund, avoiding paying taxes on those gains until the end of 2026. Depending on how many years they hold the investment, they can reduce their eventual tax bill by up to 15 percent. Investments within the zones held for 10 years or more are entirely free of capital gains taxes. Public comments for the new rules will be accepted within 60 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Trump Signs America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 Into Law

On October 23, President Trump signed the America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-270; aka, the Water Resources Development Act [WRDA]) into law. The House previously passed the bill on Sept. 13 by voice vote and the Senate passed it on Oct. 10 by a vote of 99-1. Among other things, the legislation: authorizes several new Corps of Engineers studies, construction and environmental restoration projects as recommended by the Chief of the Corps; reauthorizes the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund at more than \$4.4 billion over the next three years; eases the streamlining process for hydropower projects; reauthorizes the popular Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) through FY 2021; and, initiates a study with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to review the Trump Administration's controversial proposal to move at least parts of the Corps out of the Defense Department.

Cities, Counties Challenge FCC on 5G Network Deployment

On October 24, Los Angeles, Seattle, and 22 other cities and counties are suing the Federal Communications Commission over its move to limit local government fees on 5G network equipment applications. Local officials filed three separate lawsuits asking the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit to overturn an FCC order that would restrict how much cities can charge AT&T Inc., Verizon Communications Inc., and other carriers to process applications for the build-out of next generation wireless infrastructure. The lawsuits reflect an ongoing battle between cities and the commission over its efforts to reduce barriers and speed up the nationwide deployment of 5G networks for connected devices and other emerging technologies. The FCC's order, adopted Sept. 26 and slated to take effect Jan. 14, 2019, also would require governments to act on applications for deployments on existing structures within 60 days. Governments would have 90 days to approve or deny applications for deployments on new structures.

Ohio Ethics Commission Newsletter Now Available



Please click [here](#) to read the latest edition of "The Voice of Ethics."



OPERSource Quarterly Newsletter

The fall quarter newsletter produced by OPERS for its membership is now available. To view the different items included in the newsletter, please click [here](#).

Ohio EPA Recycling & Litter Prevention Grants Application Period Now Open

Ohio EPA's Recycling & Litter Prevention Program (R&LP) provides grant funding to communities and businesses that initiate or expand recycling programs, encourage sustainable practices, stimulate market development for reusing recyclables and litter prevention efforts. There are three different grant programs: Community and Litter Grants, Market Development Grants and Scrap Tire Grants. For our stakeholders and partners familiar with past grant awards, Ohio EPA previously had two grant funding categories that have been combined into a single category of Community and Litter



Grants. All activities previously eligible for funding under both categories remain eligible and the funding award levels for both community recycling and litter clean-up/prevention activities are expected to remain similar to past years. Combining these grant programs together in a single category will make the online application process easier for our customers.

Ohio EPA is now accepting applications for these three recycling-related grants to be awarded in 2019. Grant applications are due Feb. 1, 2019, at 3:00 p.m.

To assist potential applicants, Ohio EPA will hold an informational webinar on Wednesday, Nov. 14, 2018.

Where else can you find more information? Please visit the Ohio EPA recycling website: recycleohio.gov.

Grant recipients will be announced in April 2019 and funding will be made available in July 2019.

Who can you contact for more information?

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