

Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert



November 3, 2017

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Legislative Activity This Week

Tuesday, October 31

House Ways & Means

HB 343 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.

Representatives of the real estate industry on Tuesday called for passage of a bill to add an additional hurdle for local governing bodies seeking to challenge property valuations. The Ohio Apartment Association, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and the Ohio Real Estate Investors Association testified in support of the legislation.

HB 371 PROPERTY TAX (Merrin) To exempt from property taxation the increased value of land subdivided for residential development until construction commences or the land is sold.

The Ohio Home Builders Association testified in favor of the legislation stating the measure will provide incentives for building, especially in low-activity areas of the state. The Building Industry Association of Central Ohio also provided written proponent testimony.

Wednesday, November 1

House Higher Education & Workforce Development

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

Barry Staff, Inc. testified in support, saying the bill would remove barriers that put the business at a disadvantage against out-of-state companies that have different options for their workers' compensation coverage.

State & Local Government

HB 121 PIPE MATERIALS (Edwards) To require a public authority to consider all piping materials that meet the engineering specifications for a state-funded water or waste water project.

An amendment was accepted and there was no testimony on the bill. The panel adopted, on a party-line vote, an amendment that sponsor Rep. Jay Edwards said does not change the thrust of the bill. Rather, he said, it addresses discussions over wording in the measure by applying language already in another section of the Ohio Revised Code. More than 20 witnesses testified on the bill including representatives from the Ohio Municipal League, the Logan Clay Products Company, the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers, the County Commissioners Association of Ohio, the Association of Ohio Metropolitan Wastewater Agencies, the Ohio Chemistry Council, Equistar Chemical, ISCO Industries, Engineered Profiles LLC, the Vinyl Institute, Oatey Company, Aurora Plastics, the Plastic Pipes Institute and Uni-Bell PVC Pipe Association.

HB 291 GOVERNMENT INSURANCE (Wiggam) To authorize counties, townships, and municipal corporations to purchase an employee dishonesty and faithful performance of duty insurance policy, instead of a bond, for protection from loss due to the fraudulent or dishonest actions of, and the failure to perform a duty prescribed by law by, an officer, official, employee, or appointee for which a bond is required by law.

Rep. Hambley amended the bill with language that he said extends the insurance option in the bill to joint self-insured pools and expands the option to include other government

positions.

House Government Accountability & Oversight

HB 312 POLITICAL SUBDIVISION SPENDING (Schuring, Greenspan) Regarding use of credit cards and debit cards by political subdivisions.

The committee voted to report the bill after accepting an amendment making several changes that sponsor Rep. Greenspan said stemmed from conversations with school officials and other interested parties. The new language would allow school administrators to serve as compliance officers, change the responsibilities of compliance officers, and revise reporting requirements for credit card rewards programs to mandate that entities report on their rewards to the state auditor's office every year.

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.

Ohioans for Tax Reform testified in support of the measure stating that there are 49 categories of local governments in the state, and that they are paid for in a variety of conflicting and overlapping levies and the bill would simplify the thought process for tax payers by requiring that they only come before voters during general elections.

Americans for Prosperity - Ohio also provided proponent testimony stating that special elections limit the number of people who are aware and can participate in the process.

HB 361 TAX COMPLAINTS (Greenspan) To increase the time within which boards of revision must decide property tax complaints.

The committee accepted an amendment that Rep. Greenspan said changes the bill to be uniform across the state. Instead of giving boards of revision 90 business days, and giving those in the largest county an additional 90 business days, the bill now gives all boards 180 days from the last day a complaint may be filed. Every county would then have the same deadline to process all complaints.

Rep. Patterson & Rep. Arndt (phone) - township cemeteries

Ohio Department of Commerce (phone) - Manufactured Homes Program

Recently Introduced Legislation

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

HJR 5 BALLOT ISSUES (Antani) Proposing to amend Sections 1a, 1b, 1e, and 1g of Article II of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to modify the requirements for the initiative and referendum processes.



Federal update

Congress Passes FY 2018 Budget Resolution, Setting Up Tax Reform Legislation

On October 26, the House passed, by a vote of 216-212, the FY 2018 Budget Resolution (H.Con.Res.71), which the Senate previously passed on Oct. 19 by a vote of 51-49. As a concurrent resolution, H.Con.Res.71 is not presented to President Trump for his signature and thus does not become law. Instead, once adopted by Congress, the budget resolution serves as a formal agreement between the House and Senate on a congressional budget plan and, as such, provides the framework for subsequent legislative action on budget matters during the current congressional session. The spending blueprint is key to Republicans' efforts to pass tax reform because it includes reconciliation instructions that will allow the plan to avoid a Democratic filibuster in the Senate and be passed with only 51 votes. The budget will allow the tax reform legislation to add up to \$1.5 trillion to the deficit over a decade. Its instructions call for the House Ways and Means, House Natural Resources, Senate Finance, and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committees to report a tax bill by Nov. 13, although this deadline is non-binding.

The budget also outlines the House and Senate GOP's political vision. It maintains spending at FY 2017 levels for the year, but would then cut non-defense spending in subsequent years, leading to a \$106 billion cut in 2027. It would also allow defense levels to continue rising at their current

rates, reaching \$684 billion at the end of a decade. The budget also proposes \$473 billion in cuts to Medicare's baseline spending over a decade and about \$1 trillion from Medicaid, though those provisions are not enforceable without additional legislation. The final discretionary spending levels that will fund the government in FY 2018 will still have to be negotiated between Congressional Republicans, Democrats and the White House ahead of a Dec. 8 deadline. Failure to reach an agreement or pass a stopgap measure by then would lead to a federal government shutdown.

The tax reform legislation for the House was publicly released on Nov. 1. House GOP leaders have laid out an ambitious goal of passing the tax code overhaul by Thanksgiving so that it can be enacted into law by year's end, however, many Republicans acknowledge that the process to enact tax reform legislation will likely take several months through early 2018. Several things that could derail the GOP's tax plans, according to Politico, include: 401(k) changes, the State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction; and a very narrow Senate GOP majority.

NATaT staff has reviewed the tax bill and reports the following regarding NATaT's priorities:

* Tax-exempt municipal bonds are maintained.

* The home mortgage interest deduction is capped at \$500k for new homes; and is maintained for existing mortgages.

* The bill provides a property tax deduction up to \$10k and eliminates the state and local income tax deduction.

ODOT Wants YOUR Input: Draft TSMO Plan Review

The transportation environment is changing. Customers have increased expectations; including receiving accurate reliable information, increased use of technology to solve problems and greater demands for government transparency. ODOT is working to meet these expectations by placing an emphasis on measuring performance and embracing the transformative role of technology and information. Faced with increasing mobility demand and constrained resources, our goal is to optimize the performance of existing infrastructure and provide measureable high-value transportation solutions.

As you may be aware, ODOT is developing a department-wide plan for new strategies in traffic management and system operations (TSMO). Coordination with local government partners is a priority in the plan, which also focuses on ensuring that the transportation system is operating as efficiently and reliably as possible. ODOT will be focused on alleviating congestion and increasing safety without adding capacity. The plan also represents a shift in philosophy from traffic monitoring to traffic management.

With this shift, the need to proactively plan for operational improvements has become more important. ODOT's draft plan represents a first, agency-wide attempt to emphasize the importance of planning for operations and develop a process that allows for this to occur. The draft plan is the product of an intensive development process that included staff interviews, workshops, meetings and document review. The recommendations constitute the beginning of a policy framework to guide the TSMO Program's development. As we finalize the plan we are seeking your input on the Plan.

Your input is very important to the finalization of this plan. You can review the various components of the plan by clicking [here](#) and provide your feedback online by going to: <http://odot.questionpro.com>. Comments are due by November 30, 2017. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the draft plan in more detail, please feel free to contact one of the ODOT Project Managers:

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