

# Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert



**December 14, 2018**

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## CALL/EMAIL SENATE & HOUSE MEMBERS TODAY!!!!

### *Thank Them for Passing HB 500 - Township Omnibus Bill*

We are happy to report that HB 500, our large township omnibus bill, passed late yesterday evening! Please contact your House and Senate members and tell them "Thank you!"

As we have previously reported, the "Lame Duck" period can be pretty crazy. As of yesterday morning, there was concern that the legislation would be held for some controversial amendments, like pay raises (see next blurb), due to the fact that the Senate Rules & Reference Committee re-referred HB 500 to Senate Finance Committee for a hearing on Thursday after already being voted out of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety & Veterans Affairs Committee. Our major concern was that the Governor had reportedly said he will veto any legislation that includes pay raise language. Because HB 500 had no appropriations, the Governor would have to veto the entire bill, not just the pay raise language.

After lengthy negotiations between the House and Senate, the Senate Finance Committee met around 10:30 p.m. last night and unanimously reported HB 500 to the full Senate for passage. Prior to the vote, two amendments were added that would fund expanded survivor benefits for first responders and offset the cost of prosecuting a high-profile murder case in Pike County involving eight victims and four defendants. The House later concurred on the changes.

The provisions in HB 500 reflect a modernization of the Revised Code to address new technology or the impact of a strict interpretation of existing law. In most circumstances the changes are not significant, but will provide townships the same authority that cities and/or counties might already have or the flexibility to operate its government more effectively and inexpensively. There are also pieces that are geographically based and affect only a handful of townships, but are nonetheless, just as important to all townships.

To read the bill in its entirety, please click [here](#).

To read the OTA's overview of the township provisions in HB 500, please click [here](#).

To read LSC's fiscal note, please click [here](#).

The OTA thanks the members of the 132nd General Assembly for passing HB 500. Specifically, the OTA would like to thank Rep. Carfagna, a former township trustee and sponsor of the bill, his aide, Abe Jacob, Sen. Uecker (also a former trustee), Finance Chairman Sen. Oelslager, Sen. Peterson, Rep. Anielski, Speaker Smith, President Obhof, House Minority Leader Strahorn, Senate Minority Leader Yuko, and House and Senate Caucus staff.

Additionally, we thank all the township officials, staff and legal counsel that came to Columbus to testify or sent in testimony. Your efforts and real-life examples helped push this bill through.

**AGAIN, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR HOUSE AND SENATE MEMBERS AND THANK THEM FOR PASSING HB 500!** [Click here to link to the Legislator Contact page.](#)

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## Pay Raise Legislation Passed by General Assembly *Next Hurdle is Governor*

Compensation adjustments for elected officials, including township officials, was amended into Senate Bill 296 on Wednesday. The House passed the bill on Thursday afternoon and the Senate concurred on the changes later that evening. The question is whether the Governor will sign or veto the legislation.

The bill, if enacted, will provide a 1.75 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) to township officials that would begin in 2019 and extend through calendar year 2028. HOWEVER, current sitting trustees and fiscal officers would not be eligible for the increase until they are re-elected.

As noted in the previous blurb, the Governor has reportedly said that he will veto any legislation that includes pay raise language. The House carefully selected SB 296 as the vehicle for the pay raise amendment due to the original subject matter - benefits for widows of fallen police and firefighters. The legislation was sent to the Governor and he now has 10 days to sign or veto the measure. If he chooses to do nothing in the 10 days, the legislation will take effect.

Watch for updates in future alerts and OTA publications.

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## OPERS Newsletter

The December issue of OPERSource, the newsletter for OPERS, is now available. Please click [here](#) to read.

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## Federal Update

Tuesday, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of the Army (Army) proposed a clear, understandable, and implementable definition of "waters of the United States" that clarifies federal authority under the Clean Water Act. Unlike the Obama administration's 2015 definition of "waters of the United States," the proposal contains a straightforward definition that would result in significant cost savings, protect the nation's navigable waters, help sustain economic growth, and reduce barriers to business development. You can read more from EPA's press release [here](#) (EPA and Army Propose New "Waters of the United States" Definition).



### **Additional Information**

- \* Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States" ([click here](#))
- \* Fact Sheets ([click here](#))
- Overview of the Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States"
- Responding to Public Input
- Economic Analysis
- Key Changes
- Economic Analysis for the Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States"
- Resource and Programmatic Assessment for the Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the

United States"

\* Public Listening Session: EPA and the Army will hold a public listening session on the proposed "Revised Definition of Waters of the United States" on Wednesday, January 23, 2018 at The Reardon Convention Center in Kansas City, KS. A Federal Register notice will be published shortly with more details.

\* Additional Resources ([click here](#))

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