



Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert

February 22, 2019

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Legislative Action This Week

DeWine Introduces Transportation Budget

Governor DeWine rolled out his proposed transportation budget ([HB 62](#)) in the House on Thursday. The proposal includes an 18-cent motor vehicle user fee increase and ties future increases to inflation. The substitute bill also maintains current levels of funding for local government support programs through the state at \$350 million.

The state and local governments are facing a fiscal cliff with road funding if additional revenues are not created to address the needs of our transportation system. Townships are particularly at risk, with fewer options for raising revenue locally.

HB 62 is pending before the House Finance Committee, and action is expected quickly. **Call your legislators to express support for HB 62 and additional funding for our township roads.**

ODOT has created a [website](#) addressing the transportation budget. View how your township may fair under the Governor's proposal [here](#). Note: this is only an estimate.

OTA Testifies Before House Finance

Before the Governor introduced his transportation funding plan, the OTA testified before the House Finance Committee on the funding needs of Ohio townships. Heidi Fought described the losses in revenue that Ohio townships have faced in recent years and how those losses impact a township's ability to properly maintain roads. She also reminded committee members that the need for road funding - and general funding - is great. To read Heidi's testimony, click [here](#). You can also [watch](#) committee hearings on the [Ohio Channel](#).

The OTA is a member of Fix Our Roads (FOR) Ohio, a group dedicated to educating state leaders on the critical needs of Ohio's transportation infrastructure and advocating for a funding solution that provides long-term, smart investment in Ohio's transportation future. Learn more about FOR Ohio [here](#).

Additionally, the Governor's Advisory Committee on Transportation Infrastructure recently issued its report, which called for an increase to the motor vehicle user fee. Some of these recommendations are reflected in Substitute HB 62. You can review the full report [here](#).

OTA Legislative Meetings

The OTA continued introductory meetings with new members this week. Productive discussions were had with Reps. Russo (D-Upper Arlington), Carruthers (R-Hamilton), and Plummer (R-Dayton), analyzing township priorities and upcoming budget issues.

Rep. Carfagna organized an interested party meeting regarding broadband expansion and the reintroduction of HB 281 from last General Assembly. HB 281 establishes a process for public/private partnerships to install broadband in underserved areas of the state. The OTA participated in the meeting, and seeing no changes, plans to support the new broadband expansion bill.

Additionally, staff at the OTA had conversations with Speaker Pro Tempore Butler, regarding the distribution of road funding to townships and Treasurer Sprague's office, regarding the Ohio Checkbook.

Bill Introductions

Sub [HB 62 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET](#) (Oelslager) - To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.

***Call your legislators! HB 62 must be passed by April 1. Now is the time to convey the needs of Ohio townships related to road funding.**

[HB 72 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS](#) (Rogers, Cera) - To create the Supplemental State Capital Improvements Pilot Program funded by a temporary transfer from the Budget Stabilization Fund and to make an appropriation.

[HB 74 JUNK WATERCRAFT](#) (Arndt) - To prohibit a property owner from leaving a junk watercraft vessel or outboard motor uncovered in the open on the owner's property.

[HB 75 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.

[HB 76 ELECTION NOTICES](#) (Merrin) - To enact the "Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act" to modify the form of election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

[HB 78 PREVAILING WAGE](#) (Riedel, Manchester) - To allow political subdivisions, special districts, and state institutions of higher education to elect to apply the Prevailing Wage Law to public improvement projects.

[HB 95 BRINE-CONVERSION OF WELLS](#) (Skindell) - To alter the Oil and Gas Law with respect to brine and the conversion of wells.

[SB 32 PET CEMETERIES](#) (Roegner) - To make changes to the law governing pet cemeteries.

[SB 36 RENTAL PROPERTY](#) (M. Huffman) - To prescribe how federally subsidized residential rental property must be valued for property tax purposes.

[SB 50 SOLID WASTE FEES](#) (Eklund) - To increase state solid waste disposal fee that is deposited into the Soil and Water Conservation District Assistance Fund, and to make an appropriation.

[SB 52 CYBER SECURITY](#) (Gavarone) - To create the civilian cyber security reserve forces, to make the Secretary of State a member of the Homeland Security Advisory Council, to require the Secretary of State to appoint a chief information security officer, to require the boards of elections to audit election results, and to make an appropriation.

[SB 57 HEMP](#) (Hill, S. Huffman) - To decriminalize hemp and hemp products and to establish a hemp cultivation licensing program.

Federal Update: VRIPA Reintroduced

The Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act (VRIPA, HR 1241) has been reintroduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. VRIPA would allow volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel to receive property tax-based incentives or other incentives tax-free, up to \$600. VRIPA is a bipartisan, commonsense solution that will allow fire/EMS departments to offer recruitment and retention incentives in communities that rely on volunteer firefighter and EMS personnel.

This legislation is supported by the National Association of Towns and Townships (NA TaT) and other organizations. To learn more about VRIPA and follow its progress, click [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Workshop: Developing Solar at the Local Level

The Ohio Environmental Council and Green Energy Ohio are teaming up with the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and the University of Dayton to host a workshop entitled Growing Local Solar: Community-based tools to enable solar development in Ohio.

When: March 20th from 10:00am-3:00pm

Where: University of Dayton, Daniel J. Curran Place

Presentations and panel discussions with policy, legal, and business experts will cover a range of topics: community choice aggregation; solar project interconnection standards; land use, building codes, and zoning considerations; neighborhood-based solar cooperatives; best practices for residential rooftop solar in historical districts and homeowners' associations; energy special improvement districts (eSIDs) and Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing; and community engagement best practices, including how to address concerns over property values.

This workshop is open to any and all, but specifically geared toward decision-makers and their staff within county, township, city and village jurisdictions.

Please be sure to register by March 13th. The event page and registration can be found [here](#).

OPERSource Available

The latest edition of OPERSource is available. You can read it by clicking [here](#).

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