



# Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert

March 1, 2019

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## Legislative Action This Week

### ***Transportation Budget Hearings Continue***

The House continued hearings this week on [HB 62](#), the biennial transportation budget. The committee heard from a litany of witnesses - many proponents of the bill and only two opponents have testified at this point.

The House is expected to release its version of HB 62 on Tuesday with a likely vote out of committee on Wednesday and a full floor vote on Thursday.

The OTA has been working with members on budget questions and amendments related to additional township funding. We've also discussed HB 62 in many of our new member meetings (see below). It's more important than ever that House members understand the budget pressures our townships are facing related to road funding.

### **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 Legislative Meetings***

The OTA continued introductory meetings with new members this week. We sat down with Rep. Manchester (R-Lakeview), Rep. Don Manning (R-New Middletown), Rep. Adam Holmes (R-Nashport), and Rep. Clites (D-Ravenna) to discuss township priorities and upcoming budget issues.

We met with Rep. Koehler regarding sewer issues in his district that fall in line with OTA priorities on the subject. The OTA also spoke with Rep. Becker to follow up on a meeting he had with ODOT officials regarding the placement of large township names on highway signs.

The OTA met with staff of Attorney General Yost's office to touch base on budget items and issues of interest to townships.

Additionally, the OTA hosted a meeting with several members of the House who are interested in township issues or have had specific concerns come up in their area - Reps. Arndt, Baldrige, Carfagna, Ryan, and Stoltzfus. The OTA hopes to take some of the issues discussed in this meeting and roll them into another township omnibus bill for this General Assembly.

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## Statehouse Committee Updates

### **House Committee Hearings - Finance**

HB 62 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET (Oelslager, S.) 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.

*The committee continued to hear testimony on the transportation budget. OTA position - support.*

#### **House Committee Hearings - Ways & Means**

**HB 75 PROPERTY VALUES** (Merrin, D.) To require local governments that contest property values to formally pass an authorizing resolution for each contest and to notify property owners.

*Rep. Merrin gave sponsor testimony on the bill. OTA position- opposed.*

#### **Senate Committee Hearings - Government Oversight & Reform**

**SB 10 THEFT IN OFFICE** (Wilson, S.) To expand the penalties for theft in office based on the amount stolen and to include as restitution audit costs of the entity that suffered the loss.

*Sen. Wilson offered sponsor testimony explaining the bill. OTA position - support.*

**SB 52 CYBER SECURITY** (Gavarone, T.) 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.

*Secretary of State Frank LaRose offered proponent testimony along with the Ohio National Guard, the Ohio Cyber Collaboration Committee, and others. OTA position - support.*

#### **Senate Committee Hearings - Ways & Means**

**SB 8 OPPORTUNITY ZONES** (Schuring, K.) To authorize tax credits for investments in an Ohio Opportunity Zone.

*The committee heard proponent testimony from the Greater Cleveland Partnership and Summit Count. OTA position - interested party.*

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## **Bill Introductions**

[HB 98 RURAL INDUSTRIAL PARK LOAN FUND](#) (Jones, Cera) - To reinstate the rural industrial park loan fund and to make an appropriation.

[HB 99 HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION ELIGIBILITY](#) (Cera, Rogers) - To raise the homestead exemption income eligibility to \$60,000 and increase the tax reduction.

[HB 109 TAX EXEMPTION](#) (Patterson, LaTourette) - To authorize a property tax exemption for land used for commercial maple sap extraction.

[HB 114 TAX CREDIT](#) (Skindell, Crawley) - To remove the income restriction on the earned income tax credit and to make the credit refundable.

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## **Grant Opportunities**

#### **ODOT Township Safety Sign Grant Program**

The ODOT Township Safety Sign Grant Program is currently accepting applications now through June 7, 2019. Townships eligible to apply for the grant during the 2019 application period have been directly notified of their eligibility by ODOT. This grant program provides up to \$50,000 per township in safety sign materials (signs, posts, and hardware) for townships determined to:

- Have a greater than average crash rating across their entire township based on their township's crash history over the previous five years; and
- Not previously have received funding under this grant program.

For this current application period, two hundred townships have been invited to apply for the program due to a temporary increase in available safety funding. All townships who plan to submit an application must attend a pre-grant meeting. If you are from an eligible township, below is a list of pre-grant meeting times and locations:

*Township Pre-Grant Meetings*

Friday, March 22 - 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM - Bowling Green

Friday, March 29 - 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM - Ashland

Monday, April 4 - 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM - Columbus

Additionally, the sign grant application must be submitted online. For more information about the program, to check your township's eligibility, or to register for a pre-grant meeting, please click [here](#).

If you have questions concerning the application process, the mandatory pre-grant meetings, or the grant in general, please contact Debbie Cox, Township Safety Sign Grant Program, at (614) 387-7359 or [debbie.cox@dot.ohio.gov](mailto:debbie.cox@dot.ohio.gov).

**Grants Writing Workshop**

Grants Writing USA will present a two-day grants workshop in Columbus, April 9-10, 2019.

Full event details can be found online at <http://grantwritingusa.com>. Members of the OTA are eligible to receive a \$30 discount by using the code "OHASSN" at time of registration. For more information, please contact Janet Darling at (888) 290-6237 or by email at [janet@grantwritingusa.com](mailto:janet@grantwritingusa.com).

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