



# Ohio Township Association Legislative Alert May 03, 2019

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## Legislative Action This Week

### ***House Makes Changes to Operating Budget***

The House Finance Committee accepted a substitute bill for [HB166](#) on Thursday this week.

The substitute bill:

- Holds LGF funding even with the Governor's proposal;
- Retains funding for the Auditor of State to support the cost of local government audits, but creates a separate fund;
- Maintains current solid waste fees through 2022.

You can see a full list of HB 166 changes [here](#).

The OTA testified before the committee on Friday to ask for reconsideration of the following amendments:

- Additional funding through the township pot (currently \$10 million/year) in the LGF;
- Reinstitution of the indigent burial reimbursement program through ODJFS and a \$1 million appropriation to support the program;
- An increase in host community fees to help defray the strain on local services around solid waste facilities;
- Addition of parameters around the transfer of cemeteries to townships;
- Authority for townships to regulate noise township-wide;
- Requiring notice of excavation on township rights-of-way;
- Requiring notice of conforming boundaries;
- Updating township nuisance statutes for consistency;
- Allowing townships to authorize the use of comp time.

You can read Heidi's full testimony [here](#) or watch the committee hearing [here](#). Heidi's testimony begins at 6:37.

The Finance Committee will meet next week to accept an omnibus amendment and vote the bill out of committee. The bill will also likely see a full House floor vote next week.

### ***OTA Testimony This Week***

It was a busy committee week for the OTA with testimony on several bills. Below are the highlights:

#### **House Ways and Means**

The OTA started the week with proponent testimony on [HB143](#), which would provide an income tax credit for volunteer firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and peace officers. You can read Heidi's testimony [here](#).

Miami Township Trustee Chris Mucher (Greene County) also provide proponent testimony on the bill and answered questions from the committee.



### **House Public Utilities**

On Wednesday, OTA Executive Director Matt DeTemple gave proponent testimony on [HB 163](#), which seeks to ensure fair water and sewer rates for township residents. The committee also received written testimony from Tom Weidman, Sycamore Township Trustee (Hamilton County). You can read Matt's testimony [here](#) and Tom's testimony [here](#).

### **House State and Local Government**

The OTA also provided written proponent testimony on [HB 74](#), which would give townships the ability to deal with junk watercraft in a manner similar to junk vehicles. You can read the OTA's testimony [here](#).

Dan Frederick, OTA Board Member and Milan Township Trustee (Erie County), gave his township's perspective and answered questions from the committee. The committee also received written testimony from Perkins Township (Erie County). You can read Dan's testimony [here](#).



### **House Criminal Justice**

On Thursday, the OTA submitted written proponent testimony on [SB 10](#), legislation that would mirror private sector penalties for public theft in office and give public entities the ability to recover forensic audit costs used to determine the extent of a theft in office. You can read the OTA's testimony [here](#).

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## **Statehouse Committee Updates**

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

[HB 166 STATE BUDGET](#) (OELSLAGER) - To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

*The committee accepted a substitute bill on Thursday and heard testimony from several witnesses on Friday; OTA position - interested party.*

### **House Committee Hearings - Transportation & Public Safety**

[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.  
*Sen. Gavarone provided sponsor testimony to the committee; OTA position - support.*

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

[HB 143 TAX CREDIT](#) (KELLER, CERA) - To grant income tax credits to persons who serve as volunteer peace officers, firefighters, or emergency medical technicians.

*The OTA provided proponent testimony on the bill; OTA position - support.*

### **House Committee Hearings - Economic & Workforce Development**

[SB 8 OPPORTUNITY ZONES](#) (SCHURING) - To authorize tax credits for investments in an Ohio Opportunity Zone.

*Sen. Schuring provided sponsor testimony to the committee; OTA position - interested party.*

[HB 98 LOAN FUND](#) (JONES, CERA) - To reinstate the rural industrial park loan fund and to make an appropriation.

*The committee heard testimony from numerous proponents of the bill; OTA position - interested party.*

### **House Committee Hearings - Public Utilities**

[HB 163 WATER/SEWER SERVICE](#) (BRINKMAN) - To create a process for withholding local government funds and state water and sewer assistance from municipal corporations that engage in certain water and sewer practices with respect to extraterritorial service.

*The OTA provided proponent testimony; OTA position - support.*

### **House Committee Hearings - State & Local Government**

[HB 46 SPENDING DATABASE](#) (GREENSPAN) - To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database.

*The committee accepted an amendment to add regional sewer and water districts to the lists of government entities covered by the database; OTA position - interested party.*

[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.

*The OTA provided proponent testimony; OTA position - support.*

### **House Committee Hearings - Criminal Justice**

[SB 10 THEFT IN OFFICE](#) (WILSON) - 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.

*The OTA provided proponent testimony; OTA position - support.*

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## **Bills in Committee Next Week**

### **House Finance - Monday, May 6th at 10:00am and Tuesday, May 7th at 9:00am**

[HB 166 STATE BUDGET](#) (OELSLAGER) - To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

7th & 8th hearings - all testimony

### **House Energy and Natural Resources - Tuesday, May 7th and Wednesday, May 8th at 9:00am**

[HB 6 ENERGY](#) (CALLENDER, WILKIN) - To create the Ohio Clean Air Program, to facilitate and encourage electricity production and use from clean air resources, to facilitate investment to reduce the emissions from other generating technologies that can be readily dispatched to satisfy demand in real time, and proactively engage the buying power of consumers in this state for the purpose of improving air quality in this state.

2nd & 3rd hearing - all testimony

### **House Transportation & Public Safety - Tuesday, May 7th at 11:00am**

[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.

**House Economic & Workforce Development - Wednesday, May 7th at 10:00am**

[SB 8 OPPORTUNITY ZONES](#) (SCHURING) - To authorize tax credits for investments in an Ohio Opportunity Zone.

2nd hearing - proponent testimony

Let us know if you are interested in testifying on any of these bills.

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## Bill Introductions

[HB 223 WIND SETBACKS](#) (Strahorn, Skindell) - To alter the minimum setback requirement for wind farms of five or more megawatts.

[HB 228 TAX CREDIT-PROTECTIVE ITEMS](#) (Schaffer) - To allow an income tax credit for law enforcement officials who purchase safety or protective items to be used in the course of official law enforcement activities.

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## Federal Update



### **FCC 2019 Broadband Deployment Report**

As reported in an FCC [press release](#), the Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau yesterday provided a revised version of the draft 2019 report on broadband deployment, reflecting a review in light of the discovery that some provider-submitted data "drastically overstated deployment data to the FCC." Research by [Free Press](#) showed that the 2019 Report relies on data that includes significant over-reporting from one particular internet service provider, BarrierFree.

The original draft report said that the number of Americans lacking Internet access that meets the Commission's fixed broadband benchmark for the purposes of section 706 - which is 25 megabits per second downstream and 3 Mbps upstream - dropped nearly 26% from 26.1 million at the end of 2016 to 19.4 million at the end of 2017.

The revised report based on the corrected data finds that "the number of Americans lacking access to a fixed terrestrial broadband connection meeting the FCC's advanced telecommunications capability benchmark speed of 25 Mbps/3 Mbps has dropped by over 18%, from 26.1 million Americans at the end of 2016 to 21.3 million at the end of 2017."

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### **Ohio Township Association**

6500 Taylor Road, Suite A, Blacklick, OH 43004

614-863-0045 | [www.OhioTownships.org](http://www.OhioTownships.org)

myers@ohiotownships.org

