



Ohio Township Association

Legislative Alert

May 15, 2020

Legislative Action This Week

Bill Addressing Water/Sewer Cost Passes Committee

This week, the House Public Utilities Committee passed [HB 163](#), which would withhold local government funds from municipalities that charge unjustifiably higher extraterritorial rates to townships and their residents. The bill now awaits a House floor vote.

The OTA has relied on information from its members to show the cost of water and sewer services for township residents versus municipal residents in these situations. **If there is a water/sewer cost disparity in your township, please send that information** to Marisa Myers at the OTA (myers@ohiotownships.org) if you have not already. Your examples help illustrate the issue for members of the General Assembly.

House Begins Hearings on SB 310

The House Finance Committee held its first hearing on [SB 310](#) this week. SB 310 provides a formula for distribution of federal CARES Act funding to local governments, including townships. The bill distributes \$350 million to local governments via the Local Government Fund formula. For additional details on the bill and associated funding, click [here](#).

As currently written, the bill requires a local government to pass a resolution ahead of receiving funding. **The OTA, in collaboration with the Office of Budget and Management, will have a sample resolution available upon the bill's enactment.**

The OTA is working with local government partners and members of the General Assembly on passage of SB 310.

Statehouse Committee Updates

House Committee Hearings - Criminal Justice Committee

[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 committee accepted several amendments recommended by the Auditor of State. OTA position - support.

[HB 539 TOWNSHIP POLICE](#) (GHANBARI, BLAIR) - To permit a township police officer who serves a population between 5,000 and 50,000 to enforce specified traffic offenses on certain interstate highways if authorized by that township's board of trustees.

Reps. Ghanbari and Blair provided sponsor testimony to the committee. OTA position - support.

House Committee Hearings - Finance

[SB 310 FEDERAL FUNDS](#) (DOLAN) - To provide for the distribution of some federal coronavirus relief funding to local subdivisions, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

Sen. Dolan provided sponsor testimony to the committee. OTA position - support.

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 committee received written opponent testimony on the bill from the Ohio Mayors Alliance, the American Water Works Association Water Utility Council, and the cities of Akron, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Delaware. OTA position - support.

ODOT Culvert Survey

Culvert sliplining is a common rehabilitation method that inserts a smaller conduit into a larger host conduit with annulus void fill material placed between the conduits. This rehabilitation method requires care when placing the fill material to ensure the liner conduit does not float or deform due to hydrostatic pressure and that it completely fills the annulus void. Current void fill operations have been found to not completely fill the annulus between the host and liner pipe. However, this is not always detected during construction. ODOT Districts have reported an absence of annulus void fill material in previously rehabilitated culverts that were discovered several years after construction when a bulkhead had been displaced or removed. ODOT is conducting a research project to develop a construction and material specification for annulus void fill material and void fill operations.

The University of Akron is conducting this research for the Department. Please complete the questionnaire by clicking on the [link](#) or forward to the appropriate person to complete. A response by June 8, 2020 would be greatly appreciated.

EPA Webinar Series

The Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance is launching a new series of webinars focused on those environmental issues that have an impact at the local level. These webinars will occur throughout the year and cover a wide range of topics from how Ohio EPA regulates sources of air pollution, waste management, wastewater, and storm water discharges to different ways your community can promote environmental stewardship and improve the environment in your local area. A description of the first webinar is below:

Sustainability in Your Community - Thursday, May 21, 2020 (10 a.m. - 11 a.m.)

Presenters: Bill Narotski and Frank Basting, OCAPP, DEFA

Description: From energy efficiency to zero waste, many communities are embracing sustainability and "green" approaches as the most cost-effective way to address environmental issues. This webinar will introduce sustainability concepts and provide examples of how sustainability and "green" approaches can be used to improve the environment in your community. The webinar will focus on the resources from Ohio EPA, including the Ohio Materials Marketplace, the Encouraging Environmental Excellence Program, and Ohio EPA's environmental assistance resources, that can assist communities to become more sustainable. For more information, click [here](#).

Federal Update

Congressional Action

The Senate was in session this week, while the House was still scheduled in recess. The House returned to Washington on Friday, May 15th to discuss its "CARES 2" COVID-19 relief legislation and rule changes that would allow members to cast proxy votes for absent colleagues and allow virtual hearings through the coronavirus pandemic.

The Senate voted on the House-passed USA FREEDOM Reauthorization Act of 2020 ([H.R. 6172](#)), which overhauls and reauthorizes certain Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) authorities that lapsed on March 15, 2020 through December 1, 2023.

House Democratic leadership has unveiled its "CARES 2" package, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act ([H.R. 6800](#)). The HEROES Act is a \$3



trillion package to respond to the coronavirus crisis. The bill funds a number of initiatives, including [additional support for state and local governments](#). The bill also expands the use of the CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund to include "use of funds to cover lost, delayed, or decreased revenue stemming from the COVID public health emergency."

As the House begins discussions on the HEROES Act, Senate Republicans and the Trump Administration have indicated that they prefer to wait at least several more weeks before passing additional COVID-19 relief legislation in order to see the impacts of the four previous COVID-19 relief bills.

NATaT has created a [Coronavirus Guidance webpage](#) to store NATaT letters, memos and briefs on the outbreak, as well as critical information and guidance released by Congress and the Administration.

2020 Census



All Your Information for the Upcoming 2020 Census

The U.S. Census Bureau continues to carefully monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation and follow the guidance of federal, state and local health authorities. We are adjusting some operations as outlined below with two key principles in mind: protecting the health and safety of our staff and the public and fulfilling our statutory requirement to deliver the 2020 Census counts to the President on schedule.

Currently, the planned completion date for data collection for the 2020 Census is July 31, 2020, but that date can and will be adjusted if necessary as the situation dictates in order to achieve a complete and accurate count.

It has never been easier to respond on your own, whether online, over the phone or by mail - all without having to meet a census taker.

Learn more about these updates and ways to be counted [here](#).

[US Census Website](#)
[Ohio Census Website](#)

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