



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Monthly Legislative Update

November 2020



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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What's Happening

2020 General Election Recap

As votes are still being counted and re-counted around the country from the November 3rd General Election for contests ranging from President of the United States to local school levies, the results in Ohio brought clarity that Republicans will continue to be the majority party in both the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate for the next two years.

Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose reports that unofficial results indicate that 5,812,804 Ohioans voted in the 2020 General Election, breaking the all-time record of 5,773,777 set in 2008 with over 155,000 outstanding absentee ballots and more than 156,000 provisional ballots still to process for the final tallies as of February 4th.

In the race for President, unofficial results indicate that former Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Kamala Harris have won more than the 270 electoral votes needed to succeed President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence as President and Vice President of the United States. In Ohio, unofficial results show that Trump won the state of Ohio and its 18 Electoral College votes over Democrat challenger Biden by over 470,000 votes or 8.2%.

While there were no U.S. Senate races on the ballot in Ohio, the balance of power in the Senate hangs in the balance. The chamber appears to be deadlocked 48-48 as of now, with Democrats appearing to flip two seats and Republicans one so far. Four races are still undecided, including two in Georgia that are projected to go to a runoff. Two Senate seats in Georgia may determine the Senate majority control, as both will go to a runoff election to be held on January 5th.

In the Democrat-controlled U.S. House of Representatives, it appears that Speaker Nancy Pelosi will retain her gavel but with a smaller majority. While all incumbent U.S. House members retained their seats in Ohio, Republicans appear to have picked up six seats so far with the outcomes in several races around the country still to be determined. U.S. House Republicans need to pick up 20 seats to claim a majority and it appears they will fall short of that.

The two races for the Ohio Supreme Court were split. Democrat Judge Jennifer Brunner defeated incumbent Republican Justice Judi French by a 55% to 45% margin. In the other race, Republican incumbent Justice Sharon Kennedy fended off challenger Democrat John O'Donnell by an identical 55% to 45% margin. The result of these outcomes mean that the Republicans on the Ohio Supreme Court will be reduced from having a 5-2 majority to just a 4-3 majority.

Despite the shadow of a \$61 million bribery scandal that resulted in a federal arrest and removal from the Speakership of Republican Representative Larry Householder, Republicans picked up seats in the Ohio House of Representatives and may have also picked up a seat in the Ohio Senate.

In the Ohio Senate, Trumbull County Democrat incumbent Senator Sean O'Brien was defeated by Republican challenger Sandy O'Brien, with the Republican candidate receiving just over 50 percent of the votes cast. However, a recount is pending in the 16th Ohio Senate District as Franklin County Republican incumbent Senator Stephanie Kunze is holding onto a lead of fewer than 50 votes over Democrat challenger Crystal Lett. If Lett prevails, Republicans will retain their 24 to 9 seat



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majority over Democrats in the Ohio Senate. Senate President Larry Obhof will not be leading the Senate next session due to term limits. Lima Republican Senator Matt Huffman appears to be the favorite to win the Senate President's gavel in the 134th General Assembly.

New House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) was pleased to see his 61-member caucus expand by at least three seats to a 64 to 35 seat margin. The largest majority in the House was set in the 132nd General Assembly when Republicans held 66 seats to Democrats' 33.) House Republicans picked up a seat by defeating Trumbull County Democrat Gil Blair by Republican Mike Loychik. In addition, Republicans won the 99th House District seat spanning Ashtabula and Geauga counties, the 96th District seat spanning Jefferson, Belmont and Monroe counties, and the 75th District in Portage County. House Democrats flipped one seat, as incumbent Republican Rep. Dave Greenspan from suburban Cleveland was defeated by Democrat challenger Monique Smith.

Interestingly, despite the controversy surrounding the House Bill 6 nuclear bailout bill and the related federal bribery charges against Householder, all Ohio House members who voted "yes" on HB 6 won reelection, including Householder, while some legislators who voted "no," including reported FBI informant Rep. Greenspan, lost their seats.

The 134th Ohio General Assembly will convene on January 4, 2021 and will be tackling big issues starting next year such as passing a new biennial state operating budget that addresses an estimated \$2 billion structural deficit, federal and state redistricting, and other big issues facing the state including helping Ohioans through the impacts of the global pandemic.

New Faces at the Statehouse

With legislative term limits, Central Ohio communities will be represented in the Statehouse by several new faces. While some of the new members are switching chambers, others have never been elected to the General Assembly before.

Here is a profile of four newly elected Ohio General Assembly members representing Central Ohio communities that have very diverse backgrounds. You will want to get to know them!

House District 25

Dontavius Jarrells (D) has been elected to succeed Rep. Bernadine Kennedy Kent, who did not seek re-election. Jarrells, while born in Cleveland, will be representing neighborhoods in the City of Columbus. A Hiram College graduate, Jarrells is a former Ohio Legislative Service Commission Fellow that was assigned to the Ohio House Democratic Caucus during his tenure. In addition, Jarrells has worked in mental health policy as a former employee of both the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA) and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS). Jarrells also served as Political Director to Ohio Attorney General candidate Steve Dettelbach and presently serves as the Chief of Communications at the Franklin County Treasurer's Office.

House District 78

Brian Stewart (R) was elected to succeed Rep. Ron Hood due to term limits to a district that spans across Pickaway, Hocking, Morgan, Fairfield and small parts of Athens and Muskingum Counties. Stewart is a Pickaway County Commissioner and former councilmember for the Village of Ashville, and very familiar with the issues that local governments face. Stewart is a U.S. Army Iraq War veteran, having served in the 3rd Infantry Division in combat missions in Baghdad in 2005. Stewart returned to school on the GI Bill and earned both his bachelor's and law degrees from the Ohio State University. In addition to having served in municipal and county elected office, Stewart maintains a successful law practice as a partner with Farthing & Stewart LLP in Circleville.

House District 92

Mark Johnson (R) was elected to succeed Rep. Gary Scherer due to term limits in a district that includes Fayette County, as well as portions of Pickaway and Ross counties. A resident of Chillicothe, Johnson serves as the Business Manager for the Tri-State Building Trades Council, and organization that represents over 50 local trade unions and 20,000 craft-

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workers of the construction industry throughout the council's three-state region. Johnson worked as both a journeyman commercial carpenter and later as a project Superintendent for a large Columbus-area contractor. Johnson also served 10 years as the Business Representative for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters Local 437.

Senate District 26

Bill Reineke (R), currently serving his third term as State Representative for the 88th Ohio House District, was elected to succeed Senator Dave Burke who was prohibited from seeking re-election due to term limits. Reineke will be switching chambers to represent a Senate district that comprises the counties of Sandusky, Seneca, Wyandot, Crawford, Morrow, Marion and Union. Reineke, a businessman serving as a partner in Reineke Family Dealerships with his two brothers, the family owns and operates 8 automobile dealerships located in Tiffin, Fostoria, Upper Sandusky, Lima and Findlay and employs 380 full and part time employees. A 30-year resident of Tiffin, Reineke is a native of Fostoria and was the oldest of ten children. His father founded the family's dealership in 1960. The Morehead State University graduate earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and also serves as the Ohio Director for the National Automobile Dealers Association.

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FY20-21 Budget

Ohio's two largest tax revenue sources lagged projections in September, but others helped push overall collections over estimates by half a percent, according to the Office of Budget and Management (OBM). Collections remain above estimates for the fiscal year so far. The non-auto sales tax was \$13.7 million or 1.8 percent off estimates, generating \$738.4 million versus \$752.1 million expected. Personal income taxes were down \$12.1 million or 1.3 percent, bringing in \$888 million versus \$900.1 million expected. The auto sales tax beat estimates by 11 percent or \$14.7 million, generating \$148.3 million versus \$133.6 million expected. That continues a trend from recent months, and OBM Director Kim Murnieks said she's not been able to discern a "definitive answer" on what's causing the increase.

Census

After months of back and forth on the end date for 2020 Census counting operations, the Census Bureau announced counting efforts officially concluded on Thursday, Oct. 15, about two weeks ahead of the previously announced Saturday, Oct. 31 deadline. According to media reports, the U.S. Supreme Court approved a request from President Donald Trump's administration to suspend a lower court order that had extended the count's schedule.

Civil Rights

The Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission is accepting nominations for awards meant to honor Ohioans who carry on the legacy of the celebrated civil rights leader. The commission, which operates with administrative support from the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' (DAS) Equal Opportunity Division, will announce award winners at the annual Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration to be held virtually in January. Nominations for each of the eight awards were to be submitted by Friday, Oct. 30.

Panelists including Sens. Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus) and Dave Burke (R-Marysville) and Rep. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland) agreed that elected officials and everyday Ohioans can do more to understand and address racism affecting the health and economic status of people of color in Ohio. Moderated by President and CEO Christi Angel of the YWCA of Columbus, the panel took up some hard questions concerning African-Americans', Hispanics' and other minorities' day-to-day experience in the Buckeye State. "The conversations around race can be challenging; they can be difficult," said Angel, a former Statehouse lobbyist. She said Ohio is becoming not less but "more white" in suburbs, exurbs and rural communities.

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Coronavirus

In the absence of a coronavirus vaccine, Gov. Mike DeWine said that wearing masks was the “pathway to freedom” to again see loved ones and safely begin returning to normal. “We want to live, but we’re not going in the right direction,” he said. “If more of us aren’t wearing masks and if more of us aren’t being careful, we’re not going to be able to do these things because the spread will be so high.”

Noting Ohio, the U.S. and the world are likely at “halftime” of the pandemic as scientists continue to work on developing a vaccine that’s ready for mass distribution in Summer 2021, DeWine had said that he was extremely concerned about the state’s current coronavirus indicators. “It could be a tough winter. It could be a tough November, December and January because we’re moving inside, and because we’re now seeing, for the last two weeks, fairly significant spread through the greater part of Ohio at a high rate,” DeWine said during his coronavirus briefing on Tuesday. “Cases are up. Positivity’s up. Hospital admissions are up. Plus the early first indicators — doctor visits, emergency room visits from people with COVID-like symptoms, these are going up very, very fast.”

The DeWine administration will soon launch a registration portal for medical providers who would like to administer the anticipated coronavirus vaccination, having recently submitted a draft plan to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for how it would distribute vaccines, Gov. Mike DeWine said. Ohio’s interim draft plan anticipates four phases of vaccine distribution.

While the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) once again reported a record number of daily COVID-19 cases, there is “still time” for the state to avoid another round of business shutdowns and hospital restrictions, Gov. Mike DeWine said during his coronavirus briefing on. “We don’t have to go there. We do not have to be there. We do not have to be in that situation. We can control this if we get 90 percent, 85 percent of people wearing masks, keeping the distance and using good common sense about the spread. We can avoid this. We can turn this around. It’s multiplying very quickly, and it will continue to do that unless we do something differently. Doing something differently is just more of us wearing masks, and more of us being careful. We’ve done it twice before. We can do it again,” DeWine said.

State leaders announced major new funding distributions to individuals, businesses, governments and institutions in response to the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Gov. Mike DeWine and GOP legislative leaders announced, and the Controlling Board approved, more than \$400 million in assistance for housing and utility costs, small businesses, bars and restaurants, rural and critical access hospitals, higher education institutions, nonprofits and arts organizations. Then on Wednesday, DeWine announced plans for the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation to grant a \$5 billion premium rebate, surpassing the total money returned in two previous rebate disbursements that the administration sought as a pandemic relief measure.

With 82 of the state’s 88 counties meeting the federal definition of “high incidence” of COVID-19 cases, Gov. Mike DeWine said he was planning to meet with leaders from each county individually to figure out better strategies to contain the fast growing spread of the coronavirus. He expanded on this approach by calling on community leaders in each county to form COVID-19 defense teams to assess the spread and focus on steps to slow that spread.

Gov. Mike DeWine used his COVID-19 briefing to introduce an expanded executive team at the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). Bureau of Workers’ Compensation Administrator Stephanie McCloud will become director. OhioHealth Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff will become ODH medical director; Interim ODH Director Lance Himes will stay on as senior deputy, taking charge of the state’s vaccine distribution plan; and Office of Budget and Management Assistant Director Kathleen Madden will become ODH chief of staff.

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Crime + Punishment

Both Jeff Longstreth, a longtime Householder aide and advisor, and lobbyist Juan Cespedes, associates of former House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford), entered into plea deals with federal prosecutors and admitted to federal conspiracy charges related to the passage of nuclear plant bailout bill, HB6 (Callender-Wilkin). They pleaded guilty to felony charges of racketeer influence and corrupt organizations (RICO) conspiracy, and could face up to 20 years in prison, up to a \$250,000 fine, and other sanctions. Under the plea agreement, both admitted that a criminal enterprise existed as charged in the indictment against them; that the enterprise affected interstate or foreign commerce; that both were associated or employed by the enterprise; and that they knowingly conspired to participate in the affairs of the enterprise through a portion of racketeering activity.

Economic Development

The pandemic and economic recovery that will follow is a “pivotal” time for the state, InnovateOhio Executive Committee Chair Falon Donohue told members, and they discussed efforts to attract business executives and workers in general to consider Ohio for the future. This had also been a topic at the previous committee meeting in June.

The defense and aerospace industries represent a specific area in which Ohio can position itself for greater success in the post-pandemic economy, and that was a topic at the Ohio Defense and Aerospace Forum. The event, first held in 2016, saw the addition of “aerospace” to its name for the first time this year and was held virtually due to the pandemic. U.S. Rep. Mike Turner (R-Centerville) noted the expanded name in his opening remarks, saying that reflects the overall work being done in Ohio. In addition to top Ohio officeholders, the forum featured Joe Zeis, defense and aerospace advisor to Gov. Mike DeWine; J.P. Nauseef, president and CIO of JobsOhio; and leaders at Ohio military bases, NASA Glenn Research Center and aerospace and defense businesses. U.S. Air Force (USAF) Brig. Gen. Heather Pringle, commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), gave the keynote address, and like other speakers, she discussed the military’s shift in focus from combatting terrorism to maintaining its position amid great power competition with China and Russia.

The Rebuilding Ohio Coalition, a group of over 325 community and economic development nonprofits, recently released a platform of state policy recommendations designed to address re-growing local economies and to stabilize families and communities amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and related economic fallout. Groups participating in the coalition include the Ohio CDC Association, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, the Economic Community Development Institute (ECDI), Finance Fund Capital Corporation, Greater Ohio Policy Center, Heritage Ohio, NeighborWorks Collaborative of Ohio and the Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, among others.

Gov. Mike DeWine and Lt. Gov. Jon Husted announced the approval of assistance for seven projects set to create 1,110 new jobs and retain 686 jobs statewide. During its monthly meeting, the Ohio Tax Credit Authority (TCA) reviewed economic development proposals brought to the board by JobsOhio and its regional partners. Collectively, the projects are expected to result in more than \$47 million in new payroll and spur more than \$743 million in investments across Ohio.

Elections 2020

Unofficial results showed a record-setting Election Day, according to Secretary of State Frank LaRose. Current results show 5,812,804 Ohioans voted in the 2020 election, surpassing the previous record set in 2008 when 5,773,777 ballots were cast overall. In 2016, 5,607,641 voters cast a ballot in the General Election.

The Republican advantage on the Ohio Supreme Court will drop to 4-3 after 10th District Court of Appeals Judge Jennifer Brunner defeated Justice Judith French. Republicans held on to the majority due to Justice Sharon Kennedy’s win over Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas Judge John O’Donnell.

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House Republicans were able to flip four Democratic seats, while Democrats picked up a seat in Cuyahoga County race, meaning the House GOP will have a 64-35 majority in the 134th General Assembly. Senate Republicans picked off their top target in Sen. Sean O'Brien (D-Cortland), but the Democrats' best chance of a pick-up has remained too close to call. Democrat Monique Smith bested Rep. Dave Greenspan (R-Westlake) to win the 16th House District seat. Those seats won by Republicans include those of Reps. Gil Blair (D-Mineral Ridge) and Randi Clites (D-Ravenna) and the open seats of term-limited Reps. Jack Cera (D-Bellaire) and John Patterson (D-Jefferson). The one race that remains too close to call is that of Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard), who held a 41-vote lead over Democrat Crystal Lett.

Ohio's congressional delegation remains intact with all incumbents winning re-election to the 117th U.S. Congress which will convene early in 2021. That means Ohio sends 12 Republicans and four Democrats to the U.S. House and one Republican, Sen. Rob Portman, and one Democrat, Sen. Sherrod Brown, to the U.S. Senate. Neither of the state's U.S. senators were up for re-election this year.

Townships enjoyed success on nearly all of the 500-plus funding issues they placed on the ballot, according to the Ohio Township Association (OTA). The OTA said 498 of 516 issues passed based on preliminary results, a 96.5 percent success rate. All but one of the library districts seeking funding support on the ballot saw victory, according to the Ohio Library Council (OLC), continuing a years-long pattern of electoral success for library systems.

Three park levies passed during the 2020 general election, according to the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) Action Fund. Groups that were part of a coalition that worked on voting issues in advance of the 2020 election said they saw a contest that was largely smooth but nonetheless highlighted some flaws in how Ohio runs the voting process. The coalition, which included ACLU of Ohio, League of Women Voters of Ohio, All Voting is Local Ohio and Ohio Voice, said a voting issues hotline largely fielded general questions about voting, but also included a 50 percent increase over 2016 in calls about improper electioneering at poll sites and voter intimidation tactics.

Ohioans should look beyond their political differences and focus on unifying principles and the shared adversary of COVID-19, Gov. Mike DeWine wrote in an open letter to Ohioans. The governor amplified the message he's been stressing at twice-weekly briefings for months, encouraging Ohioans to come together to protect themselves and one another. And he called for Congress to "quickly" pass further COVID-19 relief legislation in a bipartisan fashion.

Employment/Unemployment

While the national unemployment rate continued to tick downward to 7.9 percent for September, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the month also saw substantially fewer jobs added, at 661,000. Past numbers reported by BLS include 4.8 million jobs added in June, 1.8 million in July and 1.5 million in August, after slight revisions.

The number of initial unemployment claims has dropped back below 20,000 for each of the last two weeks, halting a four-week streak of rising weekly jobless claims. For the week ending Oct. 17, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 17,598 jobless claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). For the week ending Oct. 24, ODJFS reported 17,531 such claims to the federal government. Last week's unemployment claims report had been delayed due to a technical issue with how Ohio information was being reported to DOL, ODJFS Director Kimberly Hall and ODJFS Deputy Director Julie Smith told Hannah News, hence the reporting of two weeks.

For the week ending Oct. 31, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 21,263 initial unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). New jobless claims had fallen below 18,000 for the last two weeks, but are back up above 20,000 again as the state continues to deal with a record-setting surge in COVID-19 cases.

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Energy/Utilities

Ohio ranks 47th in the nation for electric affordability, reliability and environmental impact in the “Electric Utility Performance” scorecard released Wednesday by the Citizens’ Utility Board (CUB) of Ohio with assistance from sister organization CUB Illinois. CUB Ohio, which shares an address with the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) and appears on ActBlue’s fundraising portal, points to the Buckeye State’s “disturbing” ranking in data provided by the federal Energy Information Administration (EIA).

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) rejected the Ohio Manufacturers’ Association’s (OMA) efforts to halt customer costs supporting the state’s two nuclear plants, saying the OMA Energy Group had wrongly suggested the commission could ignore the Legislature’s statutory directive in HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) to enact a billing charge on all electric customers effective Jan. 1, 2021. Mounting litigation and administrative proceedings targeting FirstEnergy, former House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) and the shadowy 501(c)(4) Generation Now do not relieve PUCO of its legislative mandate, commissioners said.

The state utility watchdog says FirstEnergy must prove it did not divert customer payments to former House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) and the shadowy 501(c)(4) Generation Now, instead of merely denying “political or charitable” cost-shifting, and did not collect “significantly excessive earnings” in 2018-2019 that would force it to provide residential and commercial consumers a major refund. The former parent company of Ohio’s two nuclear plants is seeking a protective order from the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to shield it from the Ohio Consumers’ Counsel’s (OCC) attempts to depose FirstEnergy executive Santino Fanelli on his Sept. 30 statement denying use of ratepayer proceeds to lobby for energy subsidy bill HB6 (Callender-Wilkin).

Because the Ohio House Energy Policy and Oversight Select Committee has yet to consider public testimony on efforts to repeal energy subsidy bill HB6 (Callender-Wilkin), environmental groups held the first of three planned remote “hearings” to discuss the scandal-plagued law. “It has been three months to the day since the news broke of an alleged \$61 million bribery scandal spearheaded by former Ohio House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) surrounding HB6. Even before the scandal became front page news, HB6 was widely opposed by Ohioans because it bailed out nuclear and coal plants at a cost of over \$1 billion to Ohio consumers, puts 114,000 clean energy jobs at risk and strips away the clean energy program that has protected Ohioans’ health during this pandemic,” said Tracy Sabetta, Ohio state field organizer for Moms Clean Air Force and host of the virtual hearing.

Columbus and Cincinnati sued the state of Ohio and FirstEnergy Corp. in Franklin County court to halt the collection of nuclear and solar energy subsidies from all utility customers in Ohio. The cities say Attorney General Dave Yost’s civil suit against FirstEnergy, former House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) and related entities and cohorts in the alleged HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) bribery scheme falls short by allowing the “unconstitutional tax” of nearly \$1 billion to proceed on Jan. 1, 2021.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) will now give the Office of Ohio Consumers’ Counsel what it has sought since late summer: A thorough audit of FirstEnergy utilities covering “the time period leading up to the passage of amended substitute HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) and the subsequent referendum efforts,” the commission announced Wednesday.

The state of Ohio’s power to audit public utilities and their owners, operators and business records has been “put on trial” by FirstEnergy Corp. as it seeks to challenge the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and the Office of the Ohio Consumers’ Counsel’s (OCC) authority to examine its “political contributions” — including any supporting HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) — and other company expenditures,” the consumers’ counsel says in its latest effort to question FirstEnergy executive Santino Fanelli. OCC answered the embattled utility’s request for protective order on behalf of Fanelli Monday with a long list of Ohio Revised Code citations in support of the position that PUCO and Consumers’ Counsel Bruce Weston have “broad” powers to inquire into FirstEnergy’s internal operations affecting ratepayers.

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Federal

Addressing reporters, U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) outlined additional federal relief he believes is necessary due to the pandemic and voiced concerns the rising level of cases could lead to another shutdown of Ohio businesses and further strain hospitals. Portman said an additional “targeted” federal funding package is needed to provide further support, as well as lifting the requirement that previously allocated CARES funds must be spent by the end of the year. More money for testing, vaccine development and therapeutic treatment is also needed, he added.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown told reporters that while the Senate will meet for a lame duck session following the election, he predicted that another coronavirus stimulus package in that timeframe is unlikely, given what he characterized as Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell’s (R-KY) unwillingness to negotiate with Democrats.

Governor

Gov. Mike DeWine announced the signing of SB163 (Kunze), legislation that began as a license plate bill but was amended to include provisions on prorating plug-in electric and hybrid motor vehicle registration fees; modifications to the law that reduces Local Government Fund (LGF) distributions to subdivisions that use traffic cameras; and reimbursement to subdivisions that do not operate traffic cameras for LGF penalties the subdivisions may have incurred.

Housing/Homelessness

The delinquency rate among homeowners and renters has been rising since the COVID-19 pandemic began earlier this year, according to a report from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), indicating a potential increase in foreclosure rates in the months to come. OHFA included a look at how the pandemic is affecting housing in Ohio as part of its yearly Housing Needs Assessment report. The report shows a spike in the 90-day delinquency rate among homeowners this year starting in May and going above 3.5 percent. The foreclosure rate also began to rise around that time.

Impact Ohio

All three panelists on Impact Ohio’s budget panel agreed that looking ahead at developing the proposed budget for the FY22-23 biennium first requires getting through this fiscal year. And the big unknown is COVID — whether it will persist and for how long. Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Director Kim Murnieks tied recovery of the economy to the state’s recovery from the pandemic. She reiterated the administration’s concern with the recent trend of rapidly increasing cases, saying that “the curve of the economic universe” is tied to that of COVID cases. She called the next three months “critical to the economy” and state budget. “We must keep COVID in check.”

Senate Majority Floor Leader Matt Huffman (R-Lima) is likely to become the Senate president-elect for the 134th General Assembly in the next couple of weeks, Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) said during the Impact Ohio Post-Election Conference. Huffman is the only known candidate for the position, according to Senate GOP spokesperson John Fortney. There had been speculation that Senate Finance Committee Chairman Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls) would also seek the job, but Dolan told Hannah News that he is supporting Huffman’s bid for president.

Secretary of State Frank LaRose said he has had a message on the board in his office for months now: “On Nov. 4, the world will know and believe the election results from Ohio.” Speaking in a video played at the Impact Ohio conference, LaRose discussed his strategies for carrying out Ohio’s election, one that was relatively glitch free, save for a few small issues.

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Local Government

The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) recently released a briefing guide for 2020 candidates, offering recommendations on what should be done to address the “challenges on multiple fronts” faced by counties. The guide opens by noting that county budgets were already strained before the pandemic “due to past state and federal policy changes,” including loss of the Medicaid managed care organization sales tax and reductions in the Local Government Fund (LGF) that have resulted in ongoing annual revenue losses of over \$300 million. Counties will lose approximately \$40 million in sales taxes due to removal of Ohio’s grandfather clause to the federal Internet Tax Freedom Act, CCAO added.

State Government

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) announced that the state exceeded its minority business expenditure goal in FY20, spending \$298.8 million with 314 businesses certified with Ohio’s Minority Business Enterprise Program (MBE). That represented 21.5 percent of \$1.39 billion in eligible expenditures, according to a DAS release.

Taxation

Lawmakers were within their rights to create a state collection system for municipal net profits taxes in the FY18-19 biennial budget, but violated the constitution by authorizing the state to keep half a percent of collected revenues to cover its administrative costs, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled.

Transportation/Infrastructure

The Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) announced that it will be launching Ride Easy Ohio, a campaign that will highlight safety initiatives to maintain public transportation as a safe and viable option during the COVID-19 pandemic. More information can be found at ohioneedstransit.org/ride-easy-ohio.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has started its annual inspection of nearly 300 plow trucks across Central Ohio to prepare for the winter season. Crews at the ODOT Hilliard Outpost spent the morning going through a 150-point inspection list, aiming to make certain that every truck is running and ready to go. These preseason checks also allow crews to address any issues before the equipment is actually needed, officials told reporters during a socially-distanced press conference in a garage. The department is also focusing on training for workers to protect each other from COVID-19, ODOT Highway Management Administrator Shawn Rostorfer said.

A joint legislative study committee was told that state agencies have not been able to find any current available product that can identify a motor vehicle after lawmakers eliminated the requirement for the use of a front license plate. The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) this week submitted its findings on whether there are viable alternatives to identify motor vehicles from the front of the vehicle to the Road to Our Future Joint Legislative Study Committee. The findings were submitted through written testimony because the committee has not been able to hold in-person hearings due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

DriveOhio announced that it and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission have partnered with a multistate coalition to solicit and deploy a state-of-the-art smart logistics project to test Level I automation. According to DriveOhio, Locomation, a trucking company focused on safety, utilizing the nation’s foremost experts in robotics technology, safety, and artificial intelligence, made a delivery run from Pittsburgh, PA through the state of Ohio via the Ohio Turnpike to Detroit, MI on Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020 using truck platooning technology. Travelling more than 280 miles, the company delivered groceries from the Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank to the Toledo Northwestern Ohio Foodbank.

The DeWine administration pulled together transportation safety leaders from a diverse cross-section of public and private interests to tackle vehicle hazards with “the greatest potential for killing people on Ohio roadways,” Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) Director Tom Stickrath told the newly-formed Ohio Traffic Safety Council. In its first meeting, Stickrath

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said the council will focus on the four traffic “Es” of education, enforcement, engineering/infrastructure and emergency response in an effort to remedy the spike in Ohio accident fatalities since 2019.

Unemployment Compensation

For the week ending Oct. 17, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 17,598 jobless claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). For the week ending Oct. 24, ODJFS reported 17,531 such claims to the federal government. The state of Ohio, which began borrowing from the federal government to cover unemployment compensation costs in mid-June, has now borrowed over \$1 billion or \$1,129,997,997 according to the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Workers’ Compensation

The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) announced that it began sending out \$1.34 billion in dividend checks Friday, Oct. 23 with 178,425 private and public employers slated to receive checks and account credits in the second dividend round. BWC previously sent out \$1.6 billion in dividend checks in April to help offset economic damages caused by the pandemic.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers’ Compensation (BWC) formally approved Gov. Mike DeWine’s request to issue a \$5 billion dividend to Ohio employers, voting unanimously during a special board meeting. BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud said the dividend, along with CARES Act funding, “will hopefully be the difference between businesses staying open and businesses closing.” She also said this action and those of DeWine will hopefully have a “noticeable difference” in Ohio’s history during the pandemic.

Legislative Updates

Goal 1: Promote regionalism at the local, state, and federal levels of government fostering economic growth, prosperity, efficient use of resources, and a high quality of life for Central Ohio residents.

HB54 LGF TAX REVENUE INCREASE (CERA J, ROGERS J) To increase the proportion of state tax revenue allocated to the Local Government Fund from 1.66% to 3.53% beginning July 1, 2019.
Current Status: 2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-54>

HB72 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND (ROGERS J, CERA J) To create the Supplemental State Capital Improvements Pilot Program funded by a temporary transfer from the Budget Stabilization Fund and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 2/20/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-72>

HB84 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS-SEWER LATERALS (HOLMES G) To expressly include, as eligible projects under the State Capital Improvements Program, water and sewer laterals located on private property.
Current Status: 3/27/2019 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-84>

HB92 VOTE ON COUNTY SALES TAX (ANTANI N, SMITH J) To require voter approval of any increase in the rate of a county sales tax.
Current Status: 3/13/2019 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-92>

HB124 RESIDENTIAL SMALL LIVESTOCK (BRINKMAN T) To allow an owner of residential property to keep small livestock on the property and to prohibit zoning authorities from regulating certain noncommercial agricultural activities on residential property.
Current Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Agriculture and Rural Development
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-124>

HB133 MILITARY-TEMPORARY LICENSURE (PERALES R, WEINSTEIN C) To require state occupational licensing agencies, under certain circumstances, to issue temporary licenses or certificates to members of the military and spouses who are licensed in another jurisdiction and have moved to Ohio for military duty.
Current Status: 10/2/2019 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-133>

HB149 PROPERTY TAX EXEMPT-RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION (MERRIN D) To enact the "Affordable Homebuilding and Housing Act" to temporarily exempt from property tax the increased value of land subdivided for residential development.
Current Status: 4/10/2019 - House Economic and Workforce Development, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-149>

HB152 TAX LEVY-SUBDIVISION CREATOR (BRINKMAN T) To require certain subdivisions to obtain the approval of the body that created the subdivision before levying a tax.
Current Status: 4/10/2019 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-152>

Legislative Updates

- HB163** WATER AND SEWER PRACTICES (BRINKMAN T) 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.
Current Status: 7/21/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Energy and Public Utilities
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-163>
- HB218** PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PATTON T) To authorize certain public entities to enter into public-private initiatives with a private party through a public-private agreement regarding public facilities.
Current Status: 6/9/2020 - BILL AMENDED, House State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-218>
- HB252** LAND REUTILIZATION (GREENSPAN D) To create the Land Reutilization Demolition Program and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 6/30/2019 - Re-Referred to Committee
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-252>
- HB287** MEDICAID WAIVER-MILITARY (RUSSO A, PERALES R) Regarding Medicaid home and community-based waiver services for relatives of active duty military.
Current Status: 6/16/2020 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-287>
- HB311** COUNTY INSPECTOR GENERAL (GREENSPAN D) To authorize counties to request and obtain a county inspector general to investigate wrongful acts or omissions in county and other political subdivision government.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - REPORTED OUT, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-311>
- HB382** PROHIBIT INCOME TAX-MUNICIPAL NONRESIDENTS (JORDAN K) To prohibit municipal corporations from levying an income tax on nonresidents' compensation for personal services or on net profits from a sole proprietorship owned by a nonresident.
Current Status: 11/6/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-382>
- HB440** SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS-MANUFACTURING (MIRANDA J, CARRUTHERS S) To authorize sales tax exemptions for property and services used to clean or maintain manufacturing machinery and for employment services used to operate manufacturing machinery.
Current Status: 1/28/2020 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-440>
- HB444** CHANGES TO TOWNSHIP LAW (BALDRIDGE B, ABRAMS C) To make various changes to township law.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - REPORTED OUT, House State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-444>

Legislative Updates

- HB487** TAX-FORFEITED LAND (GREEN D, WEST T) To increase, from one to six years, the interval within which county auditors must offer tax-forfeited land for sale and to give county auditors more discretion as to how and where such sales are conducted.
Current Status: 2/26/2020 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-487>
- HB505** AUTHORITY ELIMINATION - RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES (BECKER J, CROSSMAN J) To eliminate the specific authority of residential facilities to operate within residential zoning districts.
Current Status: 2/19/2020 - Referred to Committee House Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-505>
- HB564** PREVENT UTILITY DISRUPTION DURING COVID-19 (LELAND D) To prevent the disruption of utility service during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-564>
- HB566** INCREASE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND DISTRIBUTION (ROGERS J, CROSSMAN J) To increase the percentage of revenue to the General Revenue Fund distributed to the Local Government Fund and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-566>
- HB572** STATE OFFICES - FEE, PENALTY WAIVERS (SOBECKI L) To allow the Ohio Public Works Commission, the Ohio Water Development Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, county auditors, and county recorders, during the state of emergency due to COVID-19, to waive certain penalties and late fees, suspend certain reporting requirements, and waive electronic recording fees, and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-572>
- HB582** MAKE APPROPRIATIONS, REAPPROPRIATIONS (CALLENDER J) To make appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, and capital reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2022.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-582>
- HB591** SUSPEND EMPLOYER MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX (ROGERS J) To suspend some employer municipal income tax withholding requirements during the COVID-19 state of emergency and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-591>
- HB594** DEFERRED RETIREMENT - EMERGENCY WORKERS (CROSSMAN J, BALDRIDGE B) Regarding re-employment of a retirant as a police officer, firefighter, or emergency medical worker during a state of emergency, to allow a deferred retirement option plan participant to work past the participant's employment end date during a state of emergency, and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Financial Institutions
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-594>

Legislative Updates

- HB614** UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION, COVID RELIEF (FRAIZER M, RICHARDSON T) To create the Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Improvement Council, to revise the claims process and duties related to that process, to require the Auditor of State to examine and make recommendations on the efficiency of the process, to require the Director of Job and Family Services to create a strategic staffing plan for employees who handle inquiries and claims for unemployment benefits, to require the Chancellor of Higher Education to create a template for workforce-education partnership programs, to provide for the distribution of some federal coronavirus relief funding to local subdivisions, to extend the renewal deadline for concealed handgun licenses for ninety days or until June 30, 2021, whichever is later, to allow licensees to apply for or renew licenses with any county sheriff until that date, to authorize the conveyance of certain state-owned land, to provide funding for community projects, to make appropriations, and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 10/1/2020 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 10/1/20
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-614>
- HB631** REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCES (ROGERS J, HAMBLEY S) To authorize municipal corporations to establish regional economic development alliances for the sharing of services or resources among alliance members.
Current Status: 6/11/2020 - House Economic and Workforce Development, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-631>
- HB670** REAPPROPRIATE CAPITAL FUNDS (MERRIN D) To make capital reappropriations for certain agencies for the biennium ending June 30, 2022, and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 6/3/2020 - House Finance, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-670>
- HB704** COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREAS LAWS (CROSS J, FRAIZER M) To modify the law governing Community Redevelopment Areas and the terms under which property may be exempted in such areas.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Workforce Development
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-704>
- HB705** PUBLIC NUISANCES, BLIGHT FORECLOSURE ACTIONS (MILLER A) To amend the law regarding public nuisances and blight foreclosure actions and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-705>
- HB710** PROHIBIT BIASED POLICING (UPCHURCH T, DENSON S) To prohibit police officers from engaging in biased policing and other status-based profiling and to require the attorney general's office to establish rules regarding such police practices.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-710>
- HB716** LAW ENFORCEMENT STRANGULATION OFFENSE (LEPORE-HAGAN M, GALONSKI T) To create the offense of strangulation by a law enforcement officer.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-716>

Legislative Updates

- HB717** TRAINING SCHOOLS - PROSPECTIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT (MILLER J, UPCHURCH T) To allow the chief of police of a municipal corporation to conduct training schools for prospective law enforcement officers.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-717>
- HB720** FIRE, POLICE CHIEFS' RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS (INGRAM C, HICKS-HUDSON P) To allow a municipal corporation to require its fire chief or chief of police to reside within the municipal corporation during the chief's first five years.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-720>
- HB731** OVERTIME LAWS - SALARY THRESHOLDS (SMITH K, KELLY B) To raise the salary threshold above which certain employees are exempt from the overtime law.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Commerce and Labor
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-731>
- HB734** DELINQUENT PROPERTY TAX FORECLOSURE PROCEEDINGS (ROGERS J, HICKS-HUDSON P) To modify some delinquent property tax foreclosure proceedings and to prohibit certain tax-delinquent persons and associates from purchasing any tax-foreclosed property or delinquent tax certificates.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-734>
- HB741** DADD OFFENSES-PUBLIC RETIREMENT BENEFITS (MANNING G, GREENSPAN D) To add extortion and perjury and certain federal offenses to the offenses that may result in forfeiture or termination of public retirement system benefits.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-741>
- HB777** REINSTATE HOURS - BARS, RESTAURANTS (LANG G, PERALES R) To reinstate the authorized hours of operation for liquor permit premises that existed prior to the state of emergency declared in response to COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 10/26/2020 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-777>
- SB8** TAX CREDITS-OHIO OPPORTUNITY ZONE (SCHURING K) To authorize tax credits for investments in an Ohio Opportunity Zone.
Current Status: 5/8/2019 - House Economic and Workforce Development, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-8>
- SB39** MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS-TAX CREDIT (SCHURING K) To authorize an insurance premiums tax credit for capital contributions to transformational mixed use development projects.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - BILL AMENDED, House Economic and Workforce Development, (Seventh Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-39>

Legislative Updates

- SB114** NOISE REGULATION-TOWNSHIPS (HOTTINGER J) To expand the authority of a township to regulate noise within the unincorporated area of the township.
Current Status: 5/21/2019 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-114>
- SB206** MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS-TAX CREDIT (SCHAFFER T) To require municipal corporations with more than \$100 million in annual income tax collections to provide a tax credit to nonresident taxpayers.
Current Status: 11/19/2019 - Senate Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-206>
- SB212** AUTHORIZE TOWNSHIPS-EXEMPT PROPERTY TAX (SCHURING K) To authorize townships and municipal corporations to designate areas within which new homes and improvements to existing homes are wholly or partially exempted from property taxation.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-212>
- SB305** TELEMEDICINE DURING EMERGENCY (CRAIG H) To require health plan issuers to cover telemedicine services during a state of emergency and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/27/2020 - Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-305>
- SB309** SWIMMING CLASSES (GAVARONE T) To allow certified swimming classes to take place at a private residential swimming pool without requiring the pool's operator to obtain a public swimming pool license and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 6/3/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-309>
- SB321** MUNICIPAL TREASURERS-LIABILITY (WILSON S) To make changes regarding the circumstances in which county treasurers, township fiscal officers and deputy fiscal officers, and municipal treasurers may be held liable for a loss of public funds.
Current Status: 6/10/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-321>
- SB333** ODNR PAYMENTS-LAND ACQUISITIONS (SCHAFFER T) To require the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to make payments in lieu of taxes to local taxing units for significant land acquisitions by the department after 2018.
Current Status: 9/1/2020 - Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-333>
- SB334** DESIGNATE JUNETEENTH LEGAL HOLIDAY (CRAIG H, BRENNER A) To establish the nineteenth of June as Juneteenth, a legal holiday for which government employees receive paid leave.
Current Status: 6/30/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate General Government and Agency Review
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-334>

Legislative Updates

- SB335** REDUCE PROPERTY TAXES-OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES (CRAIG H) To reduce property taxes on owner-occupied homes to the extent that property taxes increase by more than 3% from the previous year and to name this act the Property Tax Relief and Local Government Support Act.
Current Status: 7/21/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-335>
- SB343** EVICTION COURT FILES-EXPUNGEMENT (CRAIG H, KUNZE S) Related to expungement of eviction case court files.
Current Status: 9/1/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-343>
- SB352** MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX WITHHOLDING (ROEGNER K) To modify municipal income tax employer withholding rules for COVID-19-related work-from-home employees.
Current Status: 9/22/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-352>
- SB365** REMOTE MEETINGS (FEDOR T) To extend the authorization for members of a public body to hold and attend meetings or hearings via electronic technology, during the period of the emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D on March 9, 2020, until the declared emergency is terminated.
Current Status: 9/22/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate General Government and Agency Review
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-365>

Legislative Updates

Goal 2: Achieve an advanced, inclusive, and exceptional transportation system that connects Central Ohio's people and products to the world.

- HB48** LOCAL GOVT ROAD IMPROVEMENT FUND (GREENSPAN D) To provide for a new Local Government Road Improvement Fund for local governments to fund road improvements.
Current Status: 2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-48>
- HB93** PUBLIC TRANSIT INVESTMENT (SKINDELL M, UPCHURCH T) To make appropriations related to public transportation.
Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-93>
- HB97** MINORS-BIKE HELMETS (SKINDELL M) To require bicycle operators and passengers under 18 years of age to wear protective helmets and to establish the Bicycle Safety Fund.
Current Status: 3/12/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-97>
- HB116** TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH (BRINKMAN T) To make an appropriation related to transportation planning and research.
Current Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-116>
- HB202** ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE (SMITH K, WEINSTEIN C) To establish the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Study Committee.
Current Status: 10/1/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-202>
- HB295** ELECTRIC SCOOTERS (HOOPS J) To establish requirements governing low-speed electric scooters.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED & REPORTED OUT, Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Sixth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-295>
- HB384** PERMITTING STOP SIGN REQUESTS (BOGGS K, LELAND D) To permit a local resident, neighborhood association, or neighborhood organization to request the erection of a stop sign at an intersection and to support a request for a lower prima-facie speed limit on certain streets and highways.
Current Status: 6/2/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-384>
- HB468** HANDHELD ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHILE DRIVING (LIGHTBODY M) To alter the law governing the use of a handheld electronic wireless communications device while driving.
Current Status: 5/19/2020 - BILL AMENDED, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-468>
- HB476** EMINENT DOMAIN (MANNING D, HAMBLEY S) To amend the law regarding eminent domain and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 6/9/2020 - House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-476>

Legislative Updates

- HB490** ELECTRIC/ HYBRID VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES (GREENSPAN D, SHEEHY M) To provide for the proration of the plug-in electric and hybrid motor vehicle registration fees.
Current Status: 2/11/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-490>
- HB501** ANIMAL-DRAWN VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS (WIGGAM S, KICK D) To clarify the law governing slow-moving vehicles and to revise the lighting and reflective material requirements applicable to animal-drawn vehicles.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-501>
- HB546** REGISTRATION FEES - ELECTRIC VEHICLES (MILLER J, WEINSTEIN C) To alter the definitions of “plug-in electric motor vehicle” and “hybrid motor vehicle” under the motor vehicle law and to halve the additional registration fees for those two types of motor vehicles.
Current Status: 6/2/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-546>
- SB73** PEDESTRIANS IN CROSSWALKS (BRENNER A) To alter the law governing yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks.
Current Status: 5/12/2020 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-73>
- SB85** SCHOOL ZONE SPEED LIMITS (MAHARATH T) To establish signage requirements for indicating school zones for speed limit purposes, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 9/17/2019 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-85>
- SB132** GAS TAX-LOCAL GOVERNMENT ALLOCATION (WILLIAMS S) To modify the amount of revenue derived from any increase in the motor fuel tax rate that is allocated to local governments and to change the manner in which that revenue is divided between municipal corporations, counties, and townships.
Current Status: 5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-132>
- SB161** PEER-TO-PEER CAR SHARING (HOTTINGER J, DOLAN M) To specify requirements related to peer-to-peer car sharing in Ohio.
Current Status: 6/13/2019 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-161>
- SB204** AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (SCHURING K, SYKES V) To authorize the creation of an airport development district for the purpose of funding public infrastructure improvements and attracting airlines and additional flights to a qualifying airport.
Current Status: 6/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Workforce Development
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-204>
- SB257** ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATIONS (O'BRIEN S, RULLI M) To authorize tax incentives for the purchase of plug-in electric motor vehicles and charging stations.
Current Status: 6/9/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-257>

Legislative Updates

- SB279** PROHIBIT PHONES WHILE DRIVING (MAHARATH T) To generally prohibit the use of electronic wireless devices while driving.
Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-279>
- SB285** DISTRACTED DRIVING (O'BRIEN S, KUNZE S) To revise the laws relative to distracted driving and the use of an electronic wireless communications device while driving.
Current Status: 9/22/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-285>
- SB291** ELECTRIC VEHICLE FEES (LEHNER P, HOTTINGER J) To provide for the proration of the plug-in electric and hybrid motor vehicle registration fees.
Current Status: 5/6/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-291>

Legislative Updates

Goal 3: Pursue sustainability solutions that protect and conserve our natural resources and promote a diverse supply of clean, affordable, and reliable sources of energy for our growing region.

- HB7** H2OHIO PROGRAM (GHANBARI H, PATTERSON J) To create the H2Ohio Trust Fund for the protection and preservation of Ohio's water quality, to create the H2Ohio Advisory Council to disburse money from the Fund for water quality programs, and to create the H2Ohio Endowment Board to make recommendations to the Treasurer of State regarding the issuance of securities to pay for costs related to the purposes of the Fund.
Current Status: 10/22/2019 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-7>
- HB20** SOLAR PANEL LIMITATIONS (BLESSING III L) To prohibit condominium, homeowners, and neighborhood associations from imposing unreasonable limitations on the installation of solar collector systems on the roof or exterior walls of improvements.
Current Status: 6/26/2019 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-20>
- HB104** NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT (STEIN D) To enact the Advanced Nuclear Technology Helping Energize Mankind (ANTHEM) Act by establishing the Ohio Nuclear Development Authority and the Ohio Nuclear Development Consortium and authorizing tax credits for investments therein.
Current Status: 7/21/2020 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-104>
- HB242** BAN PLASTIC BAG FEES (LANG G, JONES D) To authorize the use of an auxiliary container for any purpose, to prohibit the imposition of a tax or fee on those containers, and to apply existing anti-littering law to those containers.
Current Status: 10/13/2020 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-242>
- HB246** PUCO/OCC REFORM (VITALE N) To reform and modernize the Public Utilities Commission and the Consumers' Counsel.
Current Status: 5/28/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-246>
- HB247** RETAIL ELECTRIC SERVICE LAW (STEIN D) Regarding the competitive retail electric service law.
Current Status: 10/23/2019 - House Public Utilities, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-247>
- HB260** CLEAN ENERGY JOBS (DENSON S, WEINSTEIN C) To maintain operations of certified clean air resources, establish the Ohio generation and jobs incentive program and the energy performance and waste reduction program, and make changes regarding wind turbine siting.
Current Status: 5/28/2019 - Referred to Committee House Energy and Natural Resources
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-260>
- HB264** WATER DEVELOPMENT-LOAN REFINANCING (WILKIN S, O'BRIEN M) To allow the Ohio Water Development Authority to provide for the refinancing of loans for certain public water and waste water infrastructure projects.
Current Status: 6/30/2020 - PASSED BY SENATE; Vote 29-0
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-264>

Legislative Updates

- HB343** EMERGENCY WATER AND SEWER (PATTERSON J) To make an appropriation related to emergency water and sewer system funding.
Current Status: 2/26/2020 - BILL AMENDED, House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-343>
- HB401** TOWNSHIP REFERENDUM - WIND FARMS (REINEKE W) To require inclusion of safety specifications in wind farm certificate applications, to modify wind turbine setbacks, and to permit a township referendum vote on certain wind farm certificates.
Current Status: 12/3/2019 - House Energy and Natural Resources, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-401>
- HB522** WASTE DISPOSAL - CONSERVANCY DISTRICTS (SOBECKI L, SWEARINGEN D) To authorize conservancy districts to provide for the collection and disposal of solid waste.
Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-522>
- HB722** GARBAGE, DEBRIS - PUBLIC NUISANCE (MILLER A) To add the accumulation of garbage and debris to the conditions that may constitute a public nuisance.
Current Status: 8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-722>
- HB738** REPEAL HB6 - REVIVE PRIOR LAWS (SKINDELL M, O'BRIEN M) To repeal Sections 4 and 5 of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to repeal the changes made by H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to the laws governing electric service, renewable energy, and energy efficiency and the changes made to other related laws.
Current Status: 9/30/2020 - House Energy Policy and Oversight Select Committee, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-738>
- HB746** REPEAL HB6 (LANESE L, GREENSPAN D) To repeal the changes made by H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to the laws governing electric service, renewable energy, and energy efficiency and the changes made to other related laws.
Current Status: 9/30/2020 - House Energy Policy and Oversight Select Committee, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-746>
- SB2** STATEWIDE WATERSHED PLANNING (PETERSON B, DOLAN M) To create a statewide watershed planning structure for watershed programs to be implemented by local soil and water conservation districts.
Current Status: 2/19/2020 - BILL AMENDED, House Energy and Natural Resources, (Fifth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-2>
- SB346** REPEAL HB6 (O'BRIEN S, KUNZE S) To repeal the changes made by H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to the laws governing electric service, renewable energy, and energy efficiency and the changes made to other related laws.
Current Status: 11/10/2020 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-346>

Legislative Updates

Goal 4: Promote effective data policies and the equitable deployment of digital infrastructure that benefit Central Ohio communities.

HB13 RESIDENTIAL BROADBAND (CARFAGNA R, O'BRIEN M) To establish the residential broadband expansion program and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 7/21/2020 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-13>

HB46 STATE GOVT EXPENDITURE DATABASE (GREENSPAN D) To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database.

Current Status: 1/22/2020 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate General Government and Agency Review, (Seventh Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-46>

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