



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Monthly Legislative Update

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MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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What's Happening

Brown and Stivers to Resign from Public Leadership Positions

Two staples of the Central Ohio community and MORPC, Franklin County Commissioner Marilyn Brown and Congressman Steve Stivers recently announced their resignations from their public leadership positions.

Commissioner Brown, 66, announced earlier this week that she will resign from her position on Friday to spend more time with family. Brown was first elected Franklin County Commissioner in 2006. She easily won reelection in 2018, with a new term to be decided on next year's ballot. She also served as president of the board of commissioners in 2008, 2011 and 2014. Prior to her leadership at Franklin County Brown served as MORPC's Chair and Public Affairs Director.

Congressman Stivers, 56, announced last month he is stepping down May 16 to become president and chief executive of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. Stivers had been considered a potential Senate candidate to replace outgoing Ohio Sen. Rob Portman.

Stivers, who chaired the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) in 2017 and 2018, has represented Ohio's 15th District since 2011.

State Budget Clears Ohio House With Several Changes

The Ohio House of Representatives passed the state budget bill, House Bill 110, on April 21 by a 70-27 vote, sending it to the Ohio Senate to deliberate upon.

Among its provisions, the Ohio House added a few provisions that affect local governments and taxpayers.

- » **Open Meetings:** The House included a provision to extend the temporary authorization for public bodies to meet via electronic technology to December 31, 2021. The authorization is currently set to expire on July 1, 2021.
- » **Eminent Domain:** The House also added a provision that prohibits park districts in counties with a population between 220,000 and 240,000 from using eminent domain to appropriate property for recreational trails that will sunset on July 1, 2026. The provision only impacts park districts located in Lake and Mahoning counties.
- » **Personal Income Tax Cut:** The House included a 2 percent across-the-board personal income tax rate cut, which will reduce taxes and withholding amounts by approximately \$380 million over the biennium.

Now that the legislation has cleared one chamber, the Ohio Senate will be amending the budget bill during May and both the House and Senate will work out their differences on the budget bill during a conference committee in June. The bill will go to Governor DeWine for his signature by June 30, 2021.



What's Happening

As lawmakers deliberate on the allocation of state resources through the biennial budget process, it is encouraging that Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Monthly Financial Reports indicate that state revenues are mostly keeping pace with or exceeding revenue forecasting models. While collected \$1.63 billion in tax revenue in March, an increase of 2.6 percent above estimates, OBM reported a half billion-dollar-plus miss on income tax collections in April. However, OBM expects the lost revenue will be restored in May, which now includes the pandemic delayed deadline for income tax filing. The state's largest revenue source, the sales tax, continued its strong performance with double-digit bumps over projections in both the auto and non-auto categories last month.

Coupled with positive news in state tax revenue collections, Ohio will be receiving billions of dollars in one-time money from the federal government following the passage of the \$900 billion Consolidated Appropriations Act passed in December and the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act passed in March, with many of these dollars going to municipal governments. Additionally, these dollars should help the state have greater flexibility in determining the allocation of resources in its two-year budget.

Top News

FY22-23 Budget

The House Finance Committee unveiled its initial version of biennial budget HB110 (Oelslager), wrapping in the school funding plan from HB1 (Callender-Sweeney) and a 2 percent tax cut across the board. It also appropriates \$155 million in COVID-19 relief for small businesses and adds more oversight of the executive branch, including the creation of a Joint Legislative Oversight and Review Committee of Federal COVID Relief Aid and the referral of more spending initiatives by state agencies to the Controlling Board for approval.

Meanwhile, Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls) laid out a tentative hearing schedule that includes a newly formed Senate General Government Budget Committee chaired by Sen. Tim Schaffer (R-Lancaster) as well as sending portions of the budget to standing Senate committees to hear testimony based on specific topics. Legislators face a June 30 deadline to have the budget in place for the July 1 beginning of FY22.

The biennial budget, HB110 (Oelslager), passed the House after a final round of changes in the House Finance Committee, including police training funds, a venture capital gains income tax deduction, restructuring of the Oil and Gas Leasing Commission and the provisions of broadband expansion measure HB2 (Carfagna-Stewart). "This is a balanced plan that supports Ohio's schools and students, funds important programs to continue Ohio's economic recovery, invests in families and individuals, and protects Ohio's most vulnerable citizens," said House Finance Committee Chairman Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton). "It is a budget bill we can be proud of." Ranking Democrat Erica Crawley (D-Columbus) saw the bill differently. "Democrats wanted to see a bold blueprint for Ohio's future. That's not what this budget is. It's disappointing that Republicans didn't want to work with us to invest in the working people and families who have faced unprecedented uncertainty over the past year amid the worst public health and economic crisis in our lifetimes. Instead of making the necessary investments to ensure our recovery benefits all Ohioans, Republicans prioritized another round of tax giveaways to the wealthy that we can't afford right now — not while so many Ohioans are hurting," she said. The bill passed the House 70-27, with bipartisan support and opposition.

Top News

Census

The U.S. Census Bureau said Ohio will be one of seven states to lose a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, while six states are set to gain seats. This was the first release of data by the Census Bureau from the 2020 count, which included the population counts used for apportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. Block-level data, which is used by states to draw the district lines, will be released on Thursday, September 30. Acting Census Bureau Director Ron Jarmin said that as of April 1, 2020, the U.S. had a population of 331,449,281 million, an increase of 7.4 percent from the 2010 Census. However, he said that rate was lower than the previous growth rate from 2000 to 2010 of 9.7 percent, and the second lowest growth rate in U.S. history, trailing only 1930-1940.

Coronavirus

Gov. Mike DeWine said his administration is issuing a new health order that will consolidate some previous health orders and repeal others, moving to what he called a “back to basics approach” that emphasizes mask wearing, hand washing and social distancing. Most of all, he said the order will make it clear that events such as proms, graduations and festivals can be held this year, but those attending need to take “common sense” precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Ohio is getting \$105.6 million from the federal government to help expand efforts to distribute COVID-19 vaccinations, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced. Ohio’s share is part of \$3 billion in awards across the U.S. with funding from the recently enacted American Rescue Plan and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Legislation that would nullify all violations of COVID-19 public health orders and reimburse businesses that have been fined for breaking the rules was reported out of the House State and Local Government Committee. HB127 (Merrin) was reported out on a party-line vote. There was no discussion, and no witnesses testified.

Gov. Mike DeWine announced fully vaccinated Ohioans will no longer need to quarantine if they are exposed to someone with COVID-19. DeWine said the policy change should be particularly helpful for high school students involved in extracurricular activities like sports. Currently, those 16 and 17 years old can get vaccinated, and DeWine said about 21 percent, over one in five, of that group have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Further, he said thinks it “won’t be too long” until those 12 years of age and older will be eligible for the vaccine.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) launched a dashboard to provide county-level data on COVID test positivity rates, ODH Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff said. The dashboard map displays counties in varying shades of blue based on the positivity rate, including a special lighter shade in counties where data might be skewed because fewer than 20 tests were administered in a given week, Vanderhoff said. Downloadable CSV files of weekly county-level data are also available.

Elections 2021

Gov. Mike DeWine announced a special election timetable for filling the 15th Congressional District seat after U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers (R-Columbus) resigns in May to become head of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. The schedule is similar to the special election schedule to fill former U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge’s (D-Warrensville Heights) seat after she became the secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, with the special election primary and general election both taking place on the same dates. Declaration of candidacy for the Stivers seat is due on Monday, May 17 with the Special Election Congressional Primary on Tuesday, Aug. 3. The actual election takes place on Tuesday, Nov. 2.

Two more members of the General Assembly have launched campaigns for the Stivers’ 15th Congressional District: Rep. Jeff LaRe (R-Canal Winchester) and Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) joined Sen. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina), Rep. Brian Stewart (R-Ashville) and Fairfield County Commissioner Jeff Fix in seeking the Republican nomination.

Sen. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) said that his campaign has raised more than \$200,000 since he announced his bid for Congress at the end of April.

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Employment/Unemployment

Gov. Mike DeWine announced that he is recommending Ohio use some of the federal funds received under the American Rescue Plan to pay back the \$1.46 billion loaned to the state to cover unemployment compensation (UC) costs. He discussed the proposal with House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) and Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) saying that they agree with it.

Ohio's unemployment rate dropped to 4.7 percent in March, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) said, and nonagricultural wage and salary employment rose by 12,700 over the month, from a revised 5,302,200 in February to 5,314,900 in March.

For the week ending May 1, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 18,642 initial unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This is the first time the number of new weekly jobless claims has fallen below 20,000 since October 2020.

Energy/Utilities

Residents and small businesses in Columbus will have the choice to receive electricity exclusively from renewable energy resources beginning in June 2021 after 76 percent of voters approved the aggregation program Clean Energy Columbus (CEC) in November 2020. It will provide electric consumers 100 percent clean energy from Ohio-based wind and solar fields.

The company at the center of the 133-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) corruption scandal is in talks with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Ohio to avoid criminal charges related to the matter, according to a filing from FirstEnergy with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). "As these discussions are preliminary, FirstEnergy cannot currently predict the timing, the outcome or the impact of a possible resolution of this ongoing investigation," FirstEnergy said.

Columbus-based American Electric Power (AEP) is making the moves necessary to meet its goal of reducing carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions by 80 percent from 2000 levels by 2030, according to an analysis released by AEP and the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD). AEP, which has also set a goal of net zero CO2 emissions by 2050, plans to add more than 10,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy sources to its generation portfolio by 2030 and is investing in a more modern power grid and new energy technology, according to the company.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) followed the Office of Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) March request for full transparency in 133-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) coal plant subsidies by ordering an independent audit of American Electric Power (AEP) of Ohio, Duke Energy Ohio and AES Ohio's (formerly DP&L) revenues and customer charge-offs for the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC).

Federal

The U.S. Department of the Treasury should send American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding directly to Ohio townships, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) said.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) urged the Biden administration and Democratic Congress to embrace a bipartisan infrastructure bill. Portman and other Republicans may have found an ally in Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) was part of an effort to defeat President Joe Biden's \$2.25 trillion proposal in favor of Sen. Shelly Capito's (R-WV) smaller, \$568 billion infrastructure plan that Manchin and Portman have publicly commended. "Infrastructure always has been bipartisan; I hope it can be in this case," Portman said during a press call Tuesday.

Vice President Kamala Harris visited Cincinnati for a roundtable discussion of public transportation. The vice president's visit is part of the White House's "Getting America Back on Track Tour" meant to promote the Biden administration's recently unveiled infrastructure package.

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General Assembly/Statehouse

Under HB167, \$465 million would go to rental and utility assistance for eligible households. Rep. Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton), bill sponsor and chair of the House Finance Committee, said in most cases the funding would go directly to the landlord or utility provider. In HB168, a variety of organizations are in line for relief, with \$4.7 million for local fairs; \$3 million for veterans homes; \$112 million for child care providers; \$10 million for small businesses excluded from previous relief because they'd only been founded in 2020 or later; \$20 million for entertainment venues; and \$150 for small businesses to compensate for how need outmatched funding in a previous \$125 million round of relief. In HB169, bars, restaurants and lodging establishments would get \$125 million in assistance. In HB170, the largest of the proposals, lawmakers would provide \$857 million to schools, \$173 million to the Ohio Department of Health and more than \$8 million for the Ohio National Guard.

HB126 (Merrin) drew substantial opposition on the House floor, the latest iteration of Rep. Derek Merrin's (R-Monclova) push to set new criteria for how local governments can contest property valuations. It passed 62-29.

Sen. Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus) announced that forthcoming legislation would limit annual property tax increases at 5 percent for households at or below the median income for their county, with the state providing local governments with refunds through a similar manner as the current homestead exemption.

The Senate announced the creation of another standing committee — the General Government Budget Committee — as part of its initial release on the FY22-23 budget hearing schedule. It is chaired by Sen. Tim Schaffer (R-Lancaster). Other members include Sens. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville), vice chair; Bob Hackett (R-London), Frank Hoagland (R-Adena), George Lang (R-West Chester), Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus) and Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights).

The Senate voted unanimously to pass rent and utility assistance bill HB167 (Oelslager), sending that bill to Gov. Mike DeWine's desk. The legislation appropriates \$465 million in FY21 to DSA to fund its emergency rental assistance program, and \$100 million to the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) for emergency costs related to the pandemic in federal COVID relief dollars.

The House sent broadband expansion bill HB2 (Carfagna-Stewart) to Gov. Mike DeWine for his signature after overwhelmingly accepting the Senate amendments to the bill as well as the emergency clause, though funding for the bill is still being worked out through the biennial budget bill process. The House also passed pandemic relief measures SB108 (S. Huffman-Romanchuk) and SB109 (Manning-Rulli), after the latter was amended in House Finance Committee to include an additional \$250 million. Also passing were HB37 (Manning), regarding prescriptions for life-saving medicines, and HB176 (Carfagna-Hall), regarding athletic trainers.

Great Lakes

DeWine cabinet members overseeing H2Ohio updated the Senate Finance Committee on the governor's water quality initiative and signaled the program's proposed expansion in FY22-23. Director Dorothy Pelanda of the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), Director Mary Mertz of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and Director Laurie Stevenson of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) appeared as a panel to describe their respective roles in H2Ohio and to communicate its overall success to date.

Housing/Homelessness

The federal government under President Joe Biden will be much more active in addressing the problem of homelessness than the past administration, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Marcia Fudge told Ohio housing advocates. "My main message to you is this — help is finally here," Fudge said during the opening session of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio's (COHHIO) three-day virtual conference.

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The state of Ohio is expecting to receive about \$90 million from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to address homelessness, according to Ohio Development Services Agency (DSA) Director Lydia Mihalik.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Marcia L. Fudge announced the allocation of nearly \$5 billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to help communities across the country create affordable housing and services for people experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, which will include \$201 million for Ohio.

Local Government

Traffic camera restrictions included in the previous transportation budget represent unconstitutional violations of municipal home rule powers, a state appeals court ruled recently. The Second District Court of Appeals partially upheld a Montgomery County Common Pleas Court decision in a lawsuit brought by the city of Dayton over provisions of 133-HB62 (Oelslager). Judge Mary Donovan wrote the recent opinion, joined by Judges Michael Hall and Michael Tucker, that agreed the provisions violate the home rule amendment of the Ohio Constitution, but overturned the trial court determination that provisions also violated the constitution's single subject rule.

The Joint Committee on Force Accounts launched testimony on the major question facing Ohio counties big and small: What cap increases will they need for employee labor costs to keep construction projects in-house and to spend tax dollars wisely so that roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure do not fall into further decay? Members, including legislators and appointees of the County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO), County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO), Ohio Township Association (OTA), Ohio Municipal League (OML) and Ohio Contractors Association (OCA), heard from a half dozen county engineers and other local officials on the state of roads and bridges and their losing battle with inflation.

Natural Resources

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has approved more than \$6.3 million in Clean Ohio Trails Fund grants, according to the DeWine administration. "Trails bring families together, promote healthy living, and can connect people across the state," Gov. Mike DeWine said in an ODNR news release. "These grants provide communities with more options to help people get outside and enjoy the natural beauty that the Buckeye State has to offer."

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC) recently announced that attorney Steve Tugend had been selected as chair of the caucus' corporate roundtable, which consists of leaders in the public and private sectors. In a release, it cited Tugend's expertise as chair of Kegler Brown Hill+Ritter Government Affairs.

Public Safety

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) recently unveiled a new OVI information "dashboard" to curb impaired driving crashes and other violations through education and enforcement data. OSHP says drivers under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs continue to threaten the safety of Ohio citizens every day. The OVI Dashboard reflects troopers, OSHP's Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) agents and other law enforcement partners' work to reduce this "dangerous and deadly crime." The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that it is extending the REAL ID enforcement date from October 1, 2021 to May 3, 2023, citing issues from the COVID-19 pandemic. DHS said the pandemic "has significantly impacted states' ability to issue REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses and identification cards, with many driver's licensing agencies still operating at limited capacity."

Members of the Fix Our Roads Ohio coalition voiced their support for new distracted driving legislation, saying it makes an important expansion beyond the current prohibition on texting and allows for enforcement as a primary offense. The bill was introduced as HB283 by Reps. Cindy Abrams (R-Harrison) and Brian Lampton (R-Beavercreek). Ohio Insurance Institute President Dean Fadel said the bill reflects Gov. Mike DeWine's proposal in the transportation budget, though those provisions had been removed in the House. It also reflects 133-SB285 (O'Brien-Kunze), he said.

Top News

In its third meeting since being established by Gov. Mike DeWine last year, the Ohio Traffic Safety Council continued to discuss ways to bring down traffic fatalities in the state after Ohio saw a spike in 2020, including targeting the issue of distracted driving. Dan Fitzpatrick, an assistant policy director in the governor's office, updated the council on HB283 (Abrams-Lampton), which would establish a ban on the use of hand-held devices while driving. Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Tom Stickrath had noted that the DeWine administration including himself had pushed the Legislature to pass such a ban as a part of HB74 (Oelslager), the transportation budget, but lawmakers removed it.

Redistricting/Reapportionment

While the Census data that is needed to create new General Assembly and congressional maps may not be available until September, a coalition of voting groups said lawmakers should start the process now and make it more transparent as Ohio implements a new method approved by voters for drawing maps. Fair Districts Ohio, which includes Common Cause Ohio and the League of Women Voters of Ohio, outlined how they believe the process should go, with hearings beginning immediately and the state's running a redistricting process for the General Assembly concurrent with the process for drawing congressional lines.

Without minority party buy-in, a plan to extend constitutional redistricting deadlines is off the table, Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) said, which was the last day lawmakers could have passed a resolution to put the issue on the August special election ballot. Huffman said at the time he wouldn't move forward with the idea if Democrats weren't on board — and they weren't. House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) and Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights) instead suggested asking the Ohio Supreme Court to extend the deadlines. House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) said it will be difficult to get redistricting done on the current deadline, adding the clearest way to resolve the issue was to move the deadlines in tandem to November, as well as addressing the one-year constitutional requirement of residency. The Ohio Supreme Court can't have jurisdiction yet because there is no violation of the constitution at this point, he noted.

Taxation

Representatives of municipal governments voiced their opposition to the substitute version of HB157 (Jordan-Edwards) in the House Ways and Means Committee, saying its provisions regarding potential retroactive tax refunds could result in "very serious financial implications" for cities. The overall bill would repeal municipal income tax withholding rules regarding the pandemic that were enacted in 133-HB197 (Powell-Merrin).

Franklin County Court of Common Pleas Judge Carl Aveni has dismissed a conservative think tank's lawsuit against the state of Ohio and the city of Columbus, finding that the General Assembly had the power to impose the pandemic municipal income tax changes made in 133-HB197 (Powell-Merrin). The Buckeye Institute challenged HB197's withholding provision instructing municipalities to continue withholding municipal income tax at a taxpayer's place of work, even if the taxpayer is currently working from home in a different local jurisdiction due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transportation/Infrastructure

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced that orange barrel season is officially underway in Ohio for 2021. The agency has been holding events around the state to highlight the projects it will be undertaking this year, including an event in Columbus along I-71 on Wednesday to outline \$540 million in projects for Central Ohio. That includes 44 pavement improvement projects, 18 bridge projects and 13 safety upgrades.

Rep. Cindy Abrams (R-Harrison) said that she is joining with Rep. Brian Lampton (R-Beavercreek) to introduce legislation she said would expand current language regarding texting and driving and would bar individuals from holding electronic devices while driving.

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.

- HB43** PUBLIC BODIES - ELECTRONIC MEETINGS (SOBECKI L, HOOPS J) To authorize public bodies to meet via teleconference and video conference.
Current Status: 2/11/2021 - House Government Oversight, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-43>
- HB66** REVIEW PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS (HOOPS J) To require the reporting of information on and legislative review of property tax exemptions.
Current Status: 3/10/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-66>
- HB71** EXEMPT CERTAIN HOUSING FROM PROPERTY TAXATION (PLUMMER P, HICKS-HUDSON P) To exempt from property taxation qualifying housing for individuals diagnosed with mental illness or substance use disorder and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 2/23/2021 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-71>
- HB110** OPERATING BUDGET (OELSLAGER S) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023, to levy taxes, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.
Current Status: 5/19/2021 - Senate Finance, (Seventh Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-110>
- HB143** REGARDS THE CLEAN OHIO PROGRAM (HILLYER B) Relating to the Clean Ohio Program and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-143>
- HB177** ALLOW GOVERNMENTS TO USE BLOCKCHAIN (CARFAGNA R, FRAIZER M) To allow a governmental entity to utilize distributed ledger technology, including blockchain technology.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 95-2
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-177>
- HB228** STATE-ADMINISTERED MUNICIPAL NET PROFIT TAXES (ROEMER B) To make changes related to state-administered municipal net profits taxes.
Current Status: 5/4/2021 - BILL AMENDED, House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-228>
- HB237** REQUIRE ELECTRONIC MEANS OF RECORDING INSTRUMENTS, INCREASE FEES (HILLYER B) To require counties to provide an electronic means of recording instruments and accessing them, to allow county recorders to charge a document preservation surcharge, to increase recording fees for certain instruments, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 4/21/2021 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-237>

Legislative Updates

- HB264** MODIFY TAX RULE FOR EMPLOYEES OF TEMPORARY WORKSITE (SMITH M, SOBECKI L) To amend Section 29 of HB197 of the 133rd General Assembly to modify the municipal income tax withholding rule for employees working at a temporary worksite.
Current Status: 4/22/2021 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-264>
- HB275** EXPAND POLITICAL SUBDIVISION JOINT PURCHASING AUTHORITY (LAMPTON B) To expand political subdivision joint purchasing authority to expressly include purchases for construction services.
Current Status: 5/12/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-275>
- HCR9** URGE TREASURY DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE FISCAL RECOVER FUNDS TO TOWNSHIPS (SWEARINGEN D, HALL T) To urge the United States Department of the Treasury to provide fiscal recovery funds to townships under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2.
Current Status: 4/21/2021 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HCR-9>
- SB20** COUNTY UTILITY SUPPLY CONTRACTS (HACKETT R) To exempt county utility supply contracts entered into under a joint purchasing program from the 10-year maximum period for such contracts and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-20>
- SB45** TAX INDUCEMENTS CERTAIN BUSINESSES (PETERSON B, KUNZE S) To enhance state and local tax inducements for businesses making substantial fixed asset and employment investments and their suppliers.
Current Status: 2/23/2021 - Senate Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-45>
- SB105** MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (SYKES V, SCHURING K) To require political subdivisions to recognize state certifications of minority business enterprises.
Current Status: 5/12/2021 - Senate Small Business and Economic Opportunity, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-105>

Legislative Updates

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

- HB27** INCREASE PENALTY FOR FAILING TO SECURE VEHICLE LOAD (PATTON T) To increase the criminal penalties associated with failing to secure a load on a vehicle.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-27>
- HB47** ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATION GRANT REBATE (LOYCHIK M) To require the Director of Transportation to establish an electric vehicle charging station grant rebate program and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 3/2/2021 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-47>
- HB70** REVISE LAW FOR PASSING SCHOOL BUS (BROWN R) To make changes to the law governing passing a school bus.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-70>
- HB74** ENACT FY22-23 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET (OELSLAGER S) To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.
Current Status: 3/31/2021 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. immediately
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-74>
- HB111** ALTER USE OF CELLPHONES WHILE DRIVING LAWS (LIGHTBODY M) To alter the law governing the use of a handheld electronic wireless communications device while driving.
Current Status: 2/17/2021 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-111>
- HB141** MAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS (SKINDELL M, UPCHURCH T) To make appropriations related to public transportation.
Current Status: 2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-141>
- SB23** ILLEGALLY PASSING SCHOOL BUS (GAVARONE T) To impose a civil penalty when a driver who illegally passes a school bus cannot be identified, to designate the month of August as "School Bus Safety Awareness Month," and to designate this act as the School Bus Safety Act.
Current Status: 2/23/2021 - BILL AMENDED, Senate Veterans and Public Safety, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-23>
- SB32** ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION (RULLI M) To require the Director of Transportation to establish an electric vehicle charging station grant rebate program and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 2/17/2021 - Senate Transportation, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-32>

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.

- HB6** MODIFY LAWS GOVERNING CERTAIN PROFESSIONS DUE TO COVID-19 (ROEMER B) To amend Section 30 of H.B. 197 of the 133rd General Assembly to modify the laws governing certain health professionals and educator preparation programs due to COVID-19 and other circumstances and to modify the electric utility laws regarding energy efficiency programs; to amend the version of section 4729.92 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on October 9, 2021, to continue the changes to that section on and after that date; and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - REPORTED OUT, Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-6>
- HB10** REPEAL HB6 - REVISE ELECTRIC UTILITY SERVICE LAW (LELAND D) To repeal Section 5 of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly to make changes regarding electric utility service law, to allow the implementation of energy waste reduction programs, and to repeal certain provisions of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly.
Current Status: 2/17/2021 - House Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-10>
- HB18** REPEAL HB6 (LANESE L) Repeal HB 6 of the 133rd GA
Current Status: 2/17/2021 - House Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-18>
- HB57** REPEAL HB6 ENERGY LAWS (SKINDELL M, O'BRIEN M) 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: 2/17/2021 - House Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-57>
- HB128** REPEAL HB6 (HOOPS J, STEIN D) To make changes regarding electric utility service law, to repeal certain provisions of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly, and to provide refunds to retail electric customers in the state.
Current Status: 3/31/2021 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 90 days
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-128>
- HB192** PROHIBIT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FROM STOPPING CERTAIN ENERGY GENERATION (CUTRONA A) To prohibit counties, townships, and municipal corporations from prohibiting energy generation from fossil fuels and gas pipelines.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - House Energy and Natural Resources, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-192>
- HB201** PREVENT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FROM LIMITING NATURAL GAS USE (STEPHENS J) To prevent local governments from limiting use of natural gas.
Current Status: 5/6/2021 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 65-32
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-201>

Legislative Updates

- HB245** EXPAND ELIGIBILITY - COUNTY SEWER DISCOUNTED RATES (INGRAM C) To expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates or charges.
Current Status: 4/14/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-245>
- SB19** WETLAND MITIGATION-PROPERTY TAX (SCHAFFER T) To establish a property tax exemption for certain property used for wetland mitigation projects.
Current Status: 3/16/2021 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-19>
- SB29** ELIMINATE AUTO ENROLLMENT-UTILITY AGGREGATION (HOAGLAND F) To eliminate automatic enrollment in governmental electric and natural gas aggregation programs.
Current Status: 2/23/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-29>
- SB44** REVISE HB6 FROM 133RD G.A. (RULLI M, CIRINO J) To repeal the nuclear resource credit payment provisions, and amend, and rename as solar resource, the renewable resource credit payment provisions of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly.
Current Status: 3/9/2021 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-44>
- SB52** WIND TURBINE SETBACKS (REINEKE W, MCCOLLEY R) 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 and solar facility certificates.
Current Status: 3/23/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-52>
- SB89** RENEWABLE ENERGY (DOLAN M) To extend the renewable portfolio standard, increase solar energy benchmarks, and extend the property tax exemption for qualified energy projects that use renewable energy resources.
Current Status: 5/12/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-89>
- SB95** REGULATE UTILITY RESELLERS (MAHARATH T) To require refunds to utility customers who have been improperly charged and to regulate certain resellers of utility service.
Current Status: 3/31/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-95>
- SB96** PREVENT UTILITY DISRUPTION-COVID (WILLIAMS S) To prevent the disruption of utility service during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.
Current Status: 3/31/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-96>
- SB117** REPEAL LEGACY GENERATION PROVISIONS-HB6 (ROMANCHUK M, CRAIG H) To repeal the legacy generation resource provisions of H.B. 6 of the 133rd General Assembly and provide customers refunds.
Current Status: 5/12/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-117>

Legislative Updates

- SB127** PREVENT LOCALITIES-LIMIT USE OF NATURAL GAS (LANG G, RULLI M) To prevent local governments from limiting use of natural gas.
Current Status: 3/31/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-127>

Legislative Updates

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

- HB2** REGARDS BROADBAND EXPANSION (CARFAGNA R, STEWART B) Regarding broadband expansion, including access to electric cooperative easements and facilities, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 5/5/2021 - Consideration of Senate Amendments; House Does Concur, Vote 91-4; Emergency Clause 91-4
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-2>
- HB244** TECH BASED EDUCATION - MILITARY CHILDREN (WHITE A, LAMPTON B) Regarding technology-based educational opportunities for, and the enrollment of, military children.
Current Status: 4/28/2021 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-244>
- HB278** REVISE MARCS LAWS (HILLYER B) To make changes to laws governing the multi-agency radio communications system (MARCS).
Current Status: 5/4/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-278>
- SB8** BROADBAND-ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EASEMENTS (MCCOLLEY R) Regarding broadband expansion, including access to electric cooperative easements and facilities, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 2/17/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-8>

Legislative Updates

Goal 5: Raise awareness of racial and social justice issues and work to continually improve communities within our growing region.

HB72 DESIGNATE HISPANIC, LATINX HERITAGE MONTH (MIRANDA J, CUTRONA A) To designate September 15 to October 15 each year as “Hispanic and Latinx Heritage Month.”
Current Status: 4/21/2021 - House State and Local Government, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-72>

HB238 DESIGNATE BUFFALO SOLDIERS DAY (HICKS-HUDSON P, CRAWLEY E) To designate July 28 as Buffalo Soldiers Day.
Current Status: 5/5/2021 - House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-238>

HB242 DESIGNATE AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH (YOUNG B, WEINSTEIN C) To designate April as “Autism Acceptance Month.”
Current Status: 4/14/2021 - Referred to Committee House Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-242>

HCR6 DECLARE RACISM PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (HOWSE S, CRAWLEY E) To declare racism a public health crisis and to ask the governor to establish a working group to promote racial equity in Ohio.
Current Status: 3/17/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HCR-6>

HCR15 DESIGNATE BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK (BRENT J, HOWSE S) Designating the week of April 11 - April 17, 2021, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in Ohio.
Current Status: 4/14/2021 - Referred to Committee House Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HCR-15>

SB78 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: 2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Government Oversight and Reform
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-78>

SB125 BIRTH EQUITY (KUNZE S, MAHARATH T) To enact the Save Our Mothers Act regarding birth equity, peripartum racial and ethnic disparities, and implicit bias in the health care system and to designate May as “Maternal Mortality Awareness Month.”
Current Status: 3/10/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-125>

SB137 PREGNANCY-ASSOCIATED MORTALITY REVIEW BOARD (KUNZE S, ANTONIO N) To modify the laws governing the Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review Board and to require birthing facilities to report data on severe maternal morbidity.
Current Status: 3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-137>

Legislative Updates

- SB149** BIAS-MOTIVATED CRIME (MAHARATH T, ANTONIO N) To rename the offense of ethnic intimidation to bias-motivated crime; to expand the scope of bias-motivated crime; to require peace officer training on bias-motivated crime; and to require data collection and reporting on bias-motivated crime.
Current Status: 4/21/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-149>
- SB170** OHIO DAY FOR CULTURAL DIVERSITY (ANTANI N) To designate May 21st as "Ohio Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development."
Current Status: 4/28/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Government Oversight and Reform
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-170>
- SCR4** DECLARE RACISM PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (CRAIG H, WILLIAMS S) To declare racism a public health crisis and to ask the Governor to establish a working group to promote racial equity in Ohio.
Current Status: 2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SCR-4>
- SCR5** DENOUNCE RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION-COVID-19 (MAHARATH T, THOMAS C) To denounce all forms of stigmatization, racism, and discrimination occurring as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Current Status: 3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Health
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SCR-5>
- SJR1** PROHIBIT INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE-PUNISHMENT FOR CRIME (THOMAS C) Proposing to amend Section 6 of Article I of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to prohibit involuntary servitude in Ohio for the punishment of crime.
Current Status: 4/20/2021 - Senate Judiciary, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SJR-1>
- SR11** RECOGNIZING JANUARY 2021 AS NATIONAL SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING PREVENTION MONTH. (FEDOR T, KUNZE S) Recognizing January 2021 as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.
Current Status: 2/2/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SR-11>

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