



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Monthly Legislative Update

September 2021



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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What's Happening

Scoring Criteria, Application Deadline Set for Broadband Expansion

Through the enactment of HB 2 (Carfagna-Stewart) and HB 110 (Oelslager), the General Assembly created a program to boost broadband access across Ohio and funded it with \$250 million in the biennial budget.

Following these actions, Gov. Mike DeWine signed an executive order last month to allow the Ohio Department of Development to adopt rules on an emergency basis for the administration of a broadband expansion program.

In accordance with HB 2, the Broadband Expansion Program Authority was created within the Ohio Department of Development to conduct hearings, monitor the grant program, and distribute \$250 million to help close the funding gap between a project's annual cost and what it needs to turn a profit by assisting with infrastructure expenses. These grant dollars will help make it economically possible for nonprofits, local governments and private businesses to provide Internet service in unserved and underserved areas.

The current members are:

- » Department of Development Director Lydia Mihalik as chair
- » Lt. Gov. Jon Husted in his role as director of InnovateOhio
- » Governor's appointee Gregory Sample, who previously worked in the Internet service industry
- » Two legislative appointments are still to be announced.

The Authority's members approved the scoring criteria and a timeline for grant applications in their first meeting. The approved scoring includes such criteria as:

- » Percentage of unserved and distressed areas involved;
- » If there are financial or in-kind contributions toward the funding gap;
- » Usage of state rights-of-way;
- » Proposed Internet speed;
- » Support for community and economic development;
- » Applicant's experience and length of time in providing broadband service;
- » Extent to which funding is necessary;
- » Ability to use nearby infrastructure;
- » Potential for improving existing broadband;
- » If the project is within an opportunity zone.



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There will be a 60-day deadline of Monday, Nov. 8; a 65-day challenge period ending Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022; and a to-be-determined evaluation period by the authority following that in accordance with statute. It is unclear whether all the funds will be distributed in one round, as that depends on the quality and number of applications the Authority receives.

The next Authority meeting will be in November.

Opportunities for Water and Sewer Grant Funding

The passage of HB 168 (Fraizer-Loychik) at the end of June included the creation of the Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program and an appropriation of \$250 million to improve access to clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure backed by federal dollars Ohio received through the American Rescue Plan Act.

These grants, administered by the Ohio Department of Development, will be up to \$250,000 for design projects and up to \$5 million for construction projects to Ohio communities. Public entities within a political subdivision with the authority to own and operate public water and sewer systems and nonprofit, non-community public water systems may apply.

The grant program will include a specific emphasis on addressing the needs of economically disadvantaged communities, including providing safe, reliable drinking water in areas that lack infrastructure, providing sewage treatment capacity in unsewered areas, and promoting regional development of infrastructure to serve multiple communities.

The review process will also strongly consider the “readiness to proceed.” This means that those projects that already have approved engineering/design, plans, and permits and can begin construction within 1-6 months will receive a greater score on the application.

Brownfield Remediation and Building Demolition Grant Dollars Available

The FY22-21 budget appropriated \$500 million for brownfield remediation, building demolition and site revitalization to help assist communities with economic development, particularly in communities that may lack the resources to restore these sites themselves.

Specifically, the budget includes \$350 million for brownfield remediation and \$150 million for building demolition and site revitalization. There are also county set-asides of \$1 million and \$500,000, respectively, with the remainder of these appropriated dollars available as grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Ohio Brownfield Remediation Fund will provide grants to remediate the thousands of former commercial and industrial sites in Ohio that meet the definition of a brownfield. Grants may be up to 75% of a project’s total cost – thus a 25% match will be required.

The Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program will award grants for the demolition of commercial and residential buildings and revitalization of surrounding properties on sites that are not brownfields. Grants may be up to 75% of a project’s total cost, with a 25% required match.

Presently the Ohio Department of Development is in the process of creating rules on how these new programs will be administered.

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Auditor Of State

Nearly 80 percent of local governments in Ohio were better off financially at the end of 2020 than they were at the beginning of the year despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Auditor Keith Faber told reporters. Faber held a roundtable discussion with Statehouse reporters in his ceremonial office where he weighed in on everything from his office's overall functions, to the Ohio Redistricting Commission he is a member of, to the problems with Ohio's unemployment compensation system, which Faber's office is currently reviewing through two separate audits. On local governments' weathering the pandemic, Faber said most Ohio cities and counties ended 2020 with more money than they started, with the average of their carry forward balances increasing by 20 percent.

Ballot Issues

A group seeking to amend the Ohio Constitution to allow civil lawsuits against government jurisdictions for deprivation of constitutional rights failed to get enough valid voter signatures for the proposal to advance to the next part of the ballot issue process, said Attorney General Dave Yost. Last month, attorney Chandni Patel filed a petition summary on behalf of a committee seeking a statewide vote on a "Civil Action for Deprivation of Constitutional Rights Amendment" to the Ohio Constitution. The committee members are listed as Cynthia Brown of Canal Winchester, Sabrina Jordan of Dayton, Kevin Kahn of Cincinnati, Alicia Kirkman of Cleveland and Marcella Bailey of Columbus.

Census

The U.S. Census Bureau released the "Business Dynamics Statistics (BDS) Explorer version 1.0," which provides access to the entire BDS dataset through line charts, bar charts and thematic maps. It also provides an intuitive dashboard allowing for construction of tables and charts to compare and rank measures of business dynamism such as employment, job creation and destruction. The dashboard also tracks firm births and deaths across a wide range of establishment and firm characteristics, according to the Census. The tool is available at <https://www.census.gov/data/data-tools/bds-explorer.html>.

Coronavirus

Around one in eight hospital patients and one in five intensive care unit (ICU) patients statewide currently have COVID-19, Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff announced Thursday, Sept. 2. These ratios are even more severe in rural hospitals, Vanderhoff continued during a press briefing, with around one in four hospital patients and one in three ICU patients there due to COVID-19. The daily update of 7,087 new cases was the highest number since the winter surge, with the exception of Wednesday, Sept. 1, total of 7,102 that included more than 1,000 cases from an Aug. 15-25 backlog. The 21-day averages are now 3,929 cases, 154 hospitalizations and 15 ICU admissions. Vanderhoff said that hospitalizations had been "relatively stable" in early July -- when only a few hundred cases were being reported per day -- but that has now "grown dramatically" to approximately 10 times as much. More than 2,500 Ohioans are currently hospitalized with COVID-19, around 750 are in the ICU and 450 are on ventilators, he continued. Hospitals are only admitting those "seriously ill" with COVID, he added.

Solid organ transplant recipients, people with advanced HIV, some cancer patients and others considered to be severely immunocompromised are now eligible for a third dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Chief Medical Officer and Director Bruce Vanderhoff said. "This is a recommendation for a very small group of individuals," Vanderhoff said during a Zoom press conference, noting the group is estimated to include less than 3 percent of the Ohio population. However, federal public health officials announced plans to begin COVID-19 booster shots the week of Monday, Sept. 20 for everyone as vaccine effectiveness can wane over time, particularly given the spread of the Delta variant. The plan is pending approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Booster shots of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines will be available to adults eight months after their second shot, ensuring those prioritized for shots first have similar booster access. Plans are being developed for those who received a single-shot Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine, and the FDA and ACIP review could lead to guidance on booster shots for eligible minors.

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Gov. Mike DeWine implored parents to have their children wear masks to school and called on school officials that have not instituted a mask mandate to do so at least for the short term, saying that it would otherwise be “very difficult” to keep the Delta variant of COVID-19 out of classrooms and “impossible” to contain its spread after that point given the example seen in states such as Florida. The Delta variant represents a potential “perfect storm,” he continued, as it is “sweeping” across the state and many who are unvaccinated have contracted it. The goal of in-person learning and athletic events for the school year is already “clearly at risk” as a result, DeWine said.

As students across the state return to school, officials with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) are encouraging schools to implement masking, social distancing and vaccination protocols that protect children and prevent the need for extensive quarantining. Ohio schools and hospitals can avoid the problems occurring in Florida and other states where masks are optional in schools, ODH Director Bruce Vanderhoff said during a press conference. The state’s top doctor warned that the Delta variant is continuing to spread throughout the state, mostly among the unvaccinated.

The federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced its full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, potentially leading to an increase in vaccination rates and making it easier for schools and universities to implement vaccine mandates. The Pfizer vaccine, which will now be marketed as Comirnaty, is the first vaccine to receive full FDA approval for use against COVID-19. It first received emergency use authorization (EUA) in December 2020 and applied for full approval in May. The vaccine was fully approved for people 16 years of age and older, and remains available under EUA for those 12 to 15 years old. Gov. Mike DeWine, who has been vocal in pushing for full approval of the Pfizer vaccine, reacted to the news in a Tweet, writing “The @US_FDA granting full approval to Pfizer’s #COVID19 vaccine for those 16+ is good news! With this strong endorsement, we hope to see many more Ohioans get vaccinated to protect themselves and others. #InThisTogetherOhio #GetTheShot”

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) said that they are in the process of distributing surplus personal protective equipment (PPE) to schools, groceries, libraries, social service agencies and other entities.

After Gov. Mike DeWine shared plans to try out a new testing protocol with 10 school districts in Warren County that could avoid the need for unmasked and unvaccinated children to quarantine after exposure to COVID-19, Melissa Cropper, the head of the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT), said DeWine would be better off ordering a statewide mask mandate

The Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) voiced its support for a joint statement by the American Medical Association (AMA), American Pharmacists Association and American Society of Health-System Pharmacists in opposition to the ordering, prescribing or dispensing of ivermectin as a means of preventing or treating COVID-19 outside of clinical trials.

Economic Development

Google announced that it will invest \$1 billion in a “substantial” expansion of the data center in New Albany in Central Ohio and has further acquired 618 acres in Columbus and Lancaster for potential future data center locations. Google also announced that it would establish a “Google Cloud” region in Columbus, joining the existing network of seven regions in the U.S. and 27 worldwide. These can provide faster services so that Google Cloud Platform enterprise customers can operate more reliably and at higher speeds

The Ohio Department of Development (DOD) detailed how certain equal opportunity programs are now fully within its Minority Business Development Division due to changes made in the state budget.

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Elections 2022

Jim Renacci, the former congressman who is challenging Gov. Mike DeWine in next year's Republican gubernatorial primary, sent a letter to Attorney General Dave Yost and Secretary of State Frank LaRose asking for them to investigate the governor and his involvement in the scandal surrounding nuclear bailout bill 133-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin). An FBI investigation has led to charges against numerous individuals including former House Speaker Larry Householder. DeWine has denied knowing of the behind the scenes maneuvering to get the bill passed by Householder and former leaders of FirstEnergy. Renacci said he contacted Yost and LaRose because their offices are responsible for the overview of nonprofit organizations and political finance violations.

Employment/Unemployment

For the week ending Aug. 28, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 13,740 initial traditional unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). That number is higher than last week, when the department reported 8,182 traditional jobless claims. Ohioans filed 134,160 continued traditional unemployment claims last week, which was 2,003 fewer than the previous week.

Environment

The Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) has awarded \$4.9 million in low interest loans to Ohio communities to improve water infrastructure and water quality. For the month of July, OWDA funded 10 projects that will improve and replace aging infrastructure. The 10 awarded projects received an interest rate ranging from 0.5 percent to 1.79 percent.

Federal

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) spoke to reporters during his weekly teleconference on a bipartisan infrastructure bill, saying he believes it will help finally address the aging Brent Spence Bridge connecting Cincinnati to Kentucky. He highlighted some of the provisions of the bill, including \$110 billion over five years for new roads and bridges. Under the current formula in the bill, Portman said \$11.5 billion of that will come to Ohio.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) said Gov. Mike DeWine shares his concerns for getting rental assistance in the bipartisan infrastructure bill to Ohioans faster at the state and local level. Addressing his Bridge Investment Act as part of newly passed legislation, the senator added that Ohio has 3,200 structures needing urgent repair -- in some cases literally crumbling around motorists -- which in turn will drive Ohio jobs under the bill's "Buy America" focus.

General Assembly/Statehouse

House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) announced the process for filling the 26th House District seat that was vacated when Rep. Erica Crawley (D-Columbus) resigned to take an appointment as Franklin County Commissioner last month. Sykes said the Democratic Caucus is requesting letters of interest from individuals seeking appointment by the caucus to the open seat.

Health and Human Services

An unseasonable increase in respiratory illnesses -- including rhinovirus, parainfluenza, RSV and COVID-19 -- are pushing Ohio children's hospitals toward a "perilous situation," Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff said. Vanderhoff said during a Zoom press conference that, "The Ohio Children's Hospital Association has reported that they are seeing a wave of respiratory viruses and illnesses typically seen in winter, rather than summer." He said the increases in RSV and COVID-19 are particularly concerning, noting RSV can be extremely harmful for young children.

Three of OhioHealth's 12 hospitals are once again suspending elective procedures as the coronavirus continues to spread across the state. "Due to the upward trend in COVID-19 hospitalizations throughout Ohio, some OhioHealth hospitals will

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temporarily pause elective surgeries that require an overnight stay to free up staff and hospital capacity. Due to the fluid nature of this fourth surge, we will continually monitor capacity and pause or resume elective surgeries with an overnight stay as needed,” OhioHealth said.

Housing/Homelessness

Bill Faith, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), applauded action taken by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reinstitute an eviction moratorium in selected areas of the nation and state for 60 days or until Sunday, Oct. 3. The previous moratorium expired July 31. According to COHHIO, the CDC’s new order applies to counties with substantial and high levels of community transmission of COVID-19, “which currently applies to 70 of Ohio’s 88 counties,” according to the CDC data tracking tool.

Housing units across Ohio grew by 2.2 percent in the last decade, according to numbers released by the U.S. Census Bureau, while the vacancy rate dropped to 8.3 percent. Ohio had 5,242,524 housing units, the 2020 census determined, a growth of 2.2 percent. Ohio’s total population was 11,799,448, a growth of 262,944 persons from the 2010 census, or a 2.3 percent change. Nationally, the census found the total number of housing units grew by 6.7 percent between 2010 and 2019, approximately half the rate of growth during the previous decade. The Census Bureau said the slowdown was not unexpected as a housing boom in the mid-2000s contributed to a rapid expansion of supply, while the housing crash and ensuing recession in 2007-2008 resulted in an increase in the number of vacant units.

Judicial

The U.S. Supreme Court recently upended the Biden administration’s latest eviction moratorium by vacating a stay of a lower court ruling on the topic. Ohio housing advocates said it’s now up to Ohio judges to slow evictions in order to allow rental assistance funding to get to tenants in need. After expiration of an earlier moratorium, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) instituted a new one covering counties with substantial or high levels of COVID-19 transmission. The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, however, found the moratorium unlawful in a case brought by the Alabama Association of Realtors and other plaintiffs, but stayed its ruling at the request of the Biden administration. Justices lifted that stay Thursday, Aug. 26

Local Government

Local governments and organizations can now apply for \$250 million in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds to address water infrastructure needs, Gov. Mike DeWine announced. The Ohio Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program is open to public and non-public entities that operate water systems across the state, with an emphasis placed on addressing the needs of economically-disadvantaged communities, according to the governor’s office.

Three regions of the state including Central, Northeast and Southwest Ohio are due pay hikes for elected county officials, and some are wondering how the federal government’s busted due date for census results -- which determine county salaries -- could affect their income not only in 2021 but also in 2020.

Pensions

Retirees in the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System who aren’t yet of Medicare age will need to opt in during an upcoming open enrollment period in order to receive monthly payments for purchasing health coverage, as the termination of the OPERS group health care plan looms at year’s end. The OPERS Board of Trustees voted in early 2020 to end the group plan effective in 2022, switching to a model where it will instead provide monthly subsidies for pre-Medicare retirees to buy coverage on the open market. This health reimbursement arrangement (HRA) will be administered by Via Benefits, a vendor OPERS chose to serve as the OPERS Pre-Medicare Connector to help move retirees into new plans and manage the reimbursement payments. Open enrollment runs Nov. 1 to Dec. 15. During this time, pre-Medicare retirees will have to opt in to the HRA with Via Benefits in order to begin receiving subsidy payments.

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Redistricting/Reapportionment

The Ohio Redistricting Commission hosted its final two public hearings of the week of Aug. 23 at the University of Akron and the Ohio State University (OSU) Mansfield campus. As in previous hearings, the vast majority of witnesses expressed their frustration with current district lines that split up counties and communities. Saying the state can do better, numerous witnesses asked the commission members to put partisanship aside and pursue a redistricting process that is fair and transparent, though some also cast doubt that Republican leadership would follow through on bipartisan district maps.

As expected, the first deadline in the Ohio Constitution of Sept. 1 for the Ohio Redistricting Commission to adopt new district maps for the Ohio House and Senate passed with no agreement, giving the panel a final deadline in two weeks to come up with new maps. However, since the commission did not adopt a bipartisan map by Wednesday's deadline, majority Republicans now have the option of adopting a four-year map by Wednesday, Sept. 15, if they cannot get the support of the two Democrats on the panel

A group connected to former Republican legislators and policy staffers announced this week that it is launching a public effort "to review, examine, and score the constitutionality of proposed legislative and congressional maps proposed as part of the state's redistricting process." Renew Ohio, formed in 2013, said it has launched www.OhioMaps.org, where Ohioans will have the ability to review maps proposed to and by the Ohio Redistricting Commission. The group's board includes former Sen. Jeff Jacobson; Mike Dittoe, a former Ohio House chief of staff under Speaker Cliff Rosenberger; and Mike McGuire, a former Republican policy advisor for the Ohio House.

Transportation/Infrastructure

Members of DriveOhio's Advisory Board weighed in on where Ohio stands with smart mobility and where it should be going in the next 15 years. The board meeting held virtually included remarks from Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Director Jack Marchbanks and Joshua Eck, chief of staff for Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, who reaffirmed their commitment to the work of DriveOhio, a state initiative working to improve smart mobility. Eck said the message for Ohio shouldn't be just that the state builds cars, but that it is constantly innovating. As the automobile industry changes, Ohio will go with it.

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) approved a draft of its annual funding list, outlining transportation projects set to receive funding over the next four years, including more than \$292 million in new funding commitments. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) said it will be taking public comment on the list until Friday, Sept. 17. TRAC is scheduled to vote on the final list at its Wednesday, Sept. 22 meeting.

Unemployment Compensation

For the week ending Aug. 28, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 13,740 initial traditional unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). That number is higher than last week, when the department reported 8,182 traditional jobless claims. Ohioans filed 134,160 continued traditional unemployment claims last week, which was 2,003 fewer than the previous week.

Workforce

Over 103,400 Ohioans currently work in the clean energy and vehicles sectors, according to a report from Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2) and the Clean Energy Trust, and legislation being considered at the federal level could add thousands of additional jobs through increased investment in these sectors. The report found that clean energy businesses were "hit hard" by the pandemic and resulting economic downturn in 2020, which represented the first year-to-year decline since the two organizations began tracking the Ohio clean energy industry.

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>

HB63 AMEND EMINENT DOMAIN LAWS (CUTRONA A, STOLTZFUS R) To amend the law regarding eminent domain and to declare an emergency.

Current Status: 3/2/2021 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-63>

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>

HB77 PERMIT HIGHER ED BOARD OF TRUSTEES ATTEND ELECTRONICALLY (MANCHESTER S, SWEENEY B) To allow the board of trustees of a state institution of higher education to adopt a policy allowing the trustees to attend a board meeting via means of electronic communication.

Current Status: 5/26/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Workforce and Higher Education

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-77>

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>

HB228 STATE-ADMINISTERED MUNICIPAL NET PROFIT TAXES (ROEMER B) To make changes related to the state administration of municipal net profits taxes and the municipal taxation of retirement benefits.

Current Status: 6/2/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means

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: 6/16/2021 - Re-Referred to Committee

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>
- HB357** INDEX HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION AMOUNTS (STEPHENS J, LARE J) To index the homestead exemption amounts to inflation.
Current Status: 6/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-357>
- HB364** WATERWORKS INFRASTRUCTURE APPLICATION (PATTON T) To require the Director of Environmental Protection to adopt rules establishing maximum allowable contaminant levels in drinking water and water quality standards for certain contaminants.
Current Status: 7/1/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-364>
- HB365** DRINKING WATER SAFETY RULES (LIGHTBODY M, RUSSO A) To index the homestead exemption amounts to inflation.
Current Status: 7/1/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-365>
- HB377** CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY (HALL T, SWEARINGEN D) To amend Section 220.11 of H.B. 168 of the 134th General Assembly to make an appropriation related to coronavirus local fiscal recovery.
Current Status: 7/15/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-377>
- 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>
- SB24** FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS (GAVARONE T, PETERSON B) To enact the First-time Home Buyer Savings Act, authorizing income tax deductions for contributions to and earnings on savings accounts designated for the purchase of a home.
Current Status: 6/8/2021 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, Senate Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-24>
- 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>

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- SB105** MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (SYKES V, SCHURING K) To require political subdivisions to recognize state certifications of minority business enterprises.
Current Status: 6/10/2021 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Workforce Development
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-105>
- SB172** TAX CREDIT-NONRESIDENT TAXPAYERS (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: 5/4/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-172>
- SB193** UNPAID WATER CHARGES (WILLIAMS S) To prohibit political subdivisions from placing a lien on property for unpaid water charges.
Current Status: 6/2/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Energy and Public Utilities
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-193>

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: 6/22/2021 - BILL AMENDED, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Fourth 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>
- 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: 5/11/2021 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
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>
- HB283** EXPAND DISTRACTED DRIVING LAWS (ABRAMS C, LAMPTON B) To expand the texting while driving prohibition to a general prohibition against using an electronic wireless communications device while driving, with certain exceptions, and to create data collection requirements based on associated violations of the distracted driving laws.
Current Status: 6/10/2021 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Criminal Justice, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-283>
- HB346** REGARDING ELECTRIC MOTOR VEHICLES (MILLER J, WEINSTEIN C) To alter the definitions of "plugin 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: 6/16/2021 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-346>
- HB347** REQUIREMENTS FOR REPLICATOR MOTOR VEHICLES (FOWLER S) To establish requirements relative to the titling and use of replica motor vehicles.
Current Status: 6/16/2021 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-347>

Legislative Updates

- HB361** UNLAWFUL BLOCKS OF RAILROAD CROSSING (HALL T, MIRANDA J) To establish new requirements and increased penalties that apply to a railroad company that unlawfully blocks a railroad crossing.
Current Status: 6/28/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-361>
- 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.

- 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>
- HB175** DEREGULATE CERTAIN EPHEMERAL WATER FEATURES (HILLYER B) To deregulate certain ephemeral water features under various water pollution control laws.
Current Status: 6/23/2021 - House Agriculture and Conservation, (Fifth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-175>
- 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>
- 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>
- HB351** REPEAL NONBYPASSABLE COST RECOVERY MECHANISMS (LANESE L, STOLTZFUS R) To repeal the nonbypassable cost recovery mechanisms associated with legacy generation resources and to provide customer refunds.
Current Status: 6/22/2021 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-351>
- HB389** REGARDING ENERGY EFFICIENCY (LELAND D, SEITZ B) To permit electric distribution utilities to establish energy efficiency and peak demand reduction portfolios.
Current Status: 8/12/2021 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-389>

Legislative Updates

- SB19** REGARDING PROPERTY TAXATION (SCHAFFER T) To modify the law regarding property taxation and sales and use tax.
Current Status: 6/28/2021 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Amended on Floor, Bill Vote 61-36
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>
- 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: 6/15/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-117>
- SB127** PREVENT LOCALITIES-LIMIT USE OF NATURAL GAS (LANG G, RULLI M) To prevent local governments from limiting use of natural gas.
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-127>

Legislative Updates

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

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 or 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>

HB340 DESIGNATE SEPTEMBER INTERNATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MONTH (BIRD A, BLACKSHEAR W) To designate September as “International Underground Railroad Month.”
Current Status: 6/10/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-340>

HB341 CREATE BUREAU OF HATE CRIMES (MILLER A, WEINSTEIN C) To create the Bureau of Hate Crimes in the Office of the Attorney General and to authorize the Attorney General to prosecute a hate crime.
Current Status: 6/10/2021 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-341>

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: 6/23/2021 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HCR-6>

SB48 CULTURAL COMPETENCY-HEALTH CARE (MAHARATH T, ANTONIO N) To require certain health care professionals to complete instruction in cultural competency.
Current Status: 6/16/2021 - Senate Health, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-48>

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>

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>

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