

April 2017 Legislative Update:

April 17, 2017

The following is a list of bills that GOPC is tracking in the Ohio Legislature. Status of bills is updated as warranted. If you have any questions or concerns about a particular bill, please be sure to contact Jason Warner, Manager of Government Affairs at jwarner@greaterohio.org or by calling 614-224-0187, ext. 306.

Budget Bills

HB26: State Transportation Budget, FY2018-19 (McColley)

Introduced: February 1, 2017

Current Status: **Signed by the Governor**, effective July 1, 2017

Last Update: March 31, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill provides funding for the Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Public Safety, the Development Services Agency, Ohio Public Works Commission and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission for the next two state fiscal years, which begin on July 1, 2017 and end on June 30, 2019.

Comment: The bill includes a significant boost in funding for public transit fleet replacement, increasing funding for this program by \$10 million per year. (Click here to read the [full recap of the transportation budget](#)). Funding for this budget is primarily derived from the state motor fuel tax and federal transportation funding.

HB49: State Main Operating Budget, FY2018-19 (Smith)

Introduced: February 8, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **House Finance Committee**

Last Update: April 6, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill provides funding for state government operations for the next two state fiscal years, which begin on July 1, 2017 and end on June 30, 2019.

Comment: Also known as the general revenue fund (GRF) budget, this is the primary source of funding for state government operations for the next two years. The House is expected to pass a version of the budget by May 3, 2017; the Senate has begun informal hearings on the budget and will undertake formal hearings following the passage of the House version next month. Final passage is expected by June 30, 2017.

Housing and Urban Revitalization Issues

HB127: Building Code Requirements - Welding (Perales, Dever)

Introduced: March 14, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee](#)

Last Update: March 21, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill establishes in the Ohio Building Code requirements pertaining to structural steel welding and bridge welding.

Comment:

HB128: Building Inspection Regulations (Roegner)

Introduced: March 14, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [House Economic Development, Commerce & Labor Committee](#)

Last Update: March 21, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill permits a general contractor or owner of specified buildings to enter into a contract with a third-party private inspector or a certified building department for building inspection and to make other changes relating to building inspections.

Comment:

HB148: State Home Improvement Board Creation (Patmon)

Introduced: March 22, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [House Finance Committee](#)

Last Update: March 29, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill requires statewide registration of home improvement contractors and creates the state Home Improvement Board.

Comment:

HB164: Roofing Contractor Registration (Patton)

Introduced: March 28, 2017

Current Status: [Awaiting Committee Assignment](#)

Last Update: March 28, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill requires commercial roofing contractors to have a license.

Comment: There is a companion bill pending in the Ohio Senate (**SB115**, sponsored by Sens. **Bacon** and **Hackett**).

SB43: Building Inspection Regulations (Bacon)

Introduced: February 9, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **Senate Local Government, Public Safety & Veterans Affairs Committee**

Last Update: March 28, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill will require certain townships (those with limited home rule authority) to building codes.

Comment: The bill will permit the adoption of the building codes even if there are similar codes adopted by the county where the township is located.

Sewer and Water Infrastructure Issues

SB2: Environmental Protection Laws (Hite)

Introduced: January 31, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **House Energy & Natural Resources Committee**

Last Update: March 29, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill specifically addresses issues related to water quality.

Comment: This is the re-introduced version of SB333 from the 131st General Assembly, which did not pass by the Senate before the expiration of the last session. Per the sponsor, the bill “covers a broad range of environmental issues and will proactively work to protect the environment and improve water quality in Ohio.” The bill has passed the Ohio Senate (33-0), and is a priority for the governor.

SB51: Lake Erie Shoreline Special Improvement District (Skindell, Eklund)

Introduced: February 14, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee**

Last Update: March 29, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill will authorize the creation of a special improvement district to facilitate Lake Erie shoreline improvement.

Comment: According to the bill sponsors, this inclusion will enable homeowners on shorelines adjacent to Lake Erie to undertake cost-effective measures to abate and prevent erosion on their property.

SB112: Green Infrastructure Fund (Schiavoni)

Introduced: March 21, 2017

Current Status: **Awaiting Committee Assignment**

Last Update: March 21, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill would create a specific funding source in the state budget dedicated to funding green infrastructure projects.

Comment: According to the bill sponsors, the program will be similar to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's Surface Water Improvement Fund.

SJR4: Capital Improvement Funding – Water & Sewer Infrastructure (Schiavoni)

Introduced: March 2, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **Senate Finance Committee**

Last Update: March 7, 2017

Bill Summary: This joint resolution proposes to enact Section 2t of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to permit the issuance of general obligation bonds to fund sewer and water capital improvements.

Comment: If the Ohio Senate and Ohio House were to pass this joint resolution, the issue would then be put before the voters of the state to decide if the amendment to the state constitution should be approved.

Taxation Issues

HB70: Motor Fuel Tax Transparency (Merrin)

Introduced: February 1, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **House Ways & Means Committee**

Last Update: March 30, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill requires stickers to be placed on retail service station pumps displaying the rates of federal and state taxes applicable to gasoline and diesel fuel.

Comment: The bill would require all gas pumps in the state to display stickers listing the state gas tax rate (28-cents-per-gallon for gasoline and diesel), the federal gas tax rate (18.4 cents-per-gallon for gasoline, 24.4 cents-per-gallon for diesel fuel). Texas is the only other state with a similar law, enacted in 2015.

HB118: Tax Complaint Dismissals (Merrin)

Introduced: March 8, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [House Ways & Means Committee](#)

Last Update: March 28, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill would expressly prohibit the dismissal of a property tax complaint solely due to the failure to correctly identify the property owner.

Comment: This will codify two Ohio Supreme Court cases from 2014 and 2015

[Transportation Issues](#)

HB9: Bicycle Regulations – Malfunctioning Traffic Lights (Koehler)

Introduced: February 1, 2017

Current Status: [House concurred to Senate changes to the bill](#)

Last Update: March 30, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill seeks to clarify a provision of law that authorizes a vehicle to proceed through an intersection if the traffic control signal is malfunctioning. The bill specifies that this provision only applies to a bicycle and specifies that the bicycle may proceed through the intersection only if the signal is malfunctioning due to a failure of the vehicle detector to detect the bicycle.

Comment: The bill was needed because the previous legislation, [HB154](#) (131st General Assembly), which was passed during lame duck session, was unintentionally vague and opened up the possibility that any vehicle, not just bicycles, could proceed through any red light, not just at an intersection where a vehicle detector failed to detect the vehicle. HB9, which was passed as an emergency measure, corrects this, and will take effect immediately upon the Governor's approval.

SB6: Ohio Bridge Partnership Program (Hoagland)

Introduced: January 31, 2017

Current Status: [Passed the Senate \(33-0\)](#)

Last Update: March 22, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill extends the Ohio Bridge Partnership Program through the end of fiscal year 2019 and requires the Director of Transportation to submit a report to the Governor, Senate, and House of Representatives recommending ways to continue to fund the program.

Comment: The Bridge Partnership Program Ohio Bridge Partnership Program was created by an executive order in October of 2013, permitting the Ohio Department of Transportation to invest state resources (approximately \$138 million) repairing and replacing more than 200

county and city bridges statewide since its inception. The language from this bill was included in [HB26](#), the state transportation budget (see above), which was passed and signed into law by the governor on March 31. This bill will not be moving forward.

SB113: Vehicle Registration Tax (Coley)

Introduced: March 21, 2017

Current Status: [Awaiting Committee Assignment](#)

Last Update: March 21, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill would raise the registration fee for passenger or noncommercial motor vehicles to \$149 (currently, the fee is \$39.50) and issue to vehicle owners with cars registered in Ohio a card exempting them from the state motor fuel tax.

Comment: The rationale is that this will raise revenue from more fuel-efficient automobiles and not increase the motor fuel tax (MFT). This quadrupling of the fee is expected to raise \$1.9 billion, equal to what the MFT generates. Ohio would continue to generate MFT revenue from non-state residents purchasing fuel in the state.

Miscellaneous Issues

HB3: DataOhio Board Creation (C. Hagan, Duffey)

Introduced: February 1, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [House Finance Committee](#)

Last Update: February 8, 2017

Bill Summary: This bill will create the DataOhio Board, which will be required to make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding online access to public records and data sets of public records, and to recommend other standards for data.

Comment: This is the third attempt to enact the DataOhio Board, which has seen legislation seeking its creation in the past three General Assemblies. Past legislation has had the support of the Ohio Newspaper Association, the Ohio Auditor of State, the Ohio Municipal League, the state librarian, several economists and the national Data Coalition, as well as a letter of support for the principle of open government data from the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.

HB34: Official Notice Delivery (Hambley, Ryan)

Introduced: February 7, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the [Senate Government Oversight & Reform](#)

Last Update: March 22, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill provides that notice may be provided by means of a combination of ordinary mail and "Internet identifier of record," which the bill defines as "an electronic mail address, or any other designation used for self-identification or routing in Internet communication or posting, provided for the purpose of receiving communication." In most cases, current law authorizes only delivery by certified mail.

Comment: This is a "good government bill" that will allow the state to begin sending official notices via e-mail as one of several options for delivering official notice. The bill has already passed the House unanimously.

HB122: Establish Economic Study Committee (Hambley, Rogers)

Introduced: March 9, 2017

Current Status: Pending in the **House State & Local Government Committee**

Last Update: March 28, 2017

Bill Summary: The bill creates a Regional Economic Development Alliance Study Committee to study the benefits and challenges involved in creating regional economic development alliances.

Comment: There is a companion bill pending in the Ohio Senate (See **SB97**, sponsored by Sens. **LaRose** and **Yuko**).