



# Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

## *Monthly Legislative Update*

MARCH 2014

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KEGLER  
BROWN  
HILL+  
RITTER



### TOP ADVOCACY ITEMS

Priority	Status
Secure ODOT TRAC Funding for Regional Projects	<p>A new round of TRAC begins this year. Approximate timeframe is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» April 1 - May 30 - Window of application due</li><li>» Summer - ODOT analysis and scoring will occur</li><li>» October - MORPC committees will vote on central Ohio priorities</li><li>» 10/16/14 - Central Ohio TRAC Public Hearing</li><li>» 12/18/14 - TRAC vote on Draft list</li><li>» January - March, 2015 (30 to 90 days later) TRAC vote on final list</li></ul>
Explore Possibility of Local Governments Passing Legislation to Increase Fees for Funding Transportation Infrastructure	<p>MORPC has worked with associations representing municipalities, counties, townships, county engineers and MPOs to arrive at an agreed-upon legislative solution to license plate fees. Language has been arrived at and a strategy is being finalized to reach out to state legislators.</p>
Arrive at Solution for Uniform Municipal Income Tax Issue	<p>House Bill 5 has been passed by the House and is now before the Senate Finance Committee. Because unfavorable changes were made to the legislation in the House, MORPC opposes the bill. MORPC has been meeting with Senators that represent districts in Central Ohio as well as those that are on the committee reviewing the legislation.</p>
Establish MORPC as Top MPO Resource for Ohio Congressional Delegation on Transportation Issues	<p>MORPC conducted transportation-related conversations with members of our Congressional delegation and their Capitol Hill staffs in February.</p>
Ensure that the Proposed Reauthorization of Public Works Commission Bonds is Adopted	<p><a href="#">SJR6</a> and <a href="#">HJR9</a>, have been enacted and will be on the May 6 primary election ballot as Issue 1.</p>



### TOP NEWS IN OHIO

#### ***MORPC Continues Opposition to Substitute Municipal Income Tax Uniformity Bill***

In late 2013, the House passed HB5 and the Senate, in a move surprising to most, referred HB5 to the chamber's Finance Committee with a further announcement that Senator Bob Peterson would serve as the Republican Caucus' point person on guiding the bill through the legislative process.

MORPC continues to be opposed to the bill in its current form. The provisions of primary concern in the bill are as follows:

- » The mandatory 5-year net operating loss carry forward (NOL);
- » The mandatory pass-through entity loss offset of other income; and
- » The increase in the number of days that casual entrants can work in a municipality without incurring tax liability therein from 12 to 20 days.

MORPC's efforts in the House resulted in an amendment removing a prohibition from taxing Supplemental Executive Retirement Plan (SERP) income, and MORPC will continue to advocate for revenue neutrality as the bill continues through the legislative process. MORPC will be meeting with state Senators in our delegation and on the committee to communicate our chief concerns about the legislation and to make recommendations on how the legislation can be improved.

As of early-March, sponsor testimony before the Senate Finance Committee has yet to be scheduled.

#### ***Mid-Biennium Review Introduced***

On March 11, Governor Kasich had his "Mid Biennium Review" bill (House Bill 472) introduced. During his term, Kasich has converted what has traditionally been a budget technical corrections bill that is introduced in even-numbered years into a substantive policy bill. This year's bill was no exception as it contains a sweeping tax reform proposal, an educational reform piece and a new regulatory scheme for skill games. The tax reform proposal would cut the state's income tax rates and increase the state's earned income tax credit. To pay for these provisions, the governor proposes to increase the state's Commercial Activity Tax rate, increase the state's fracking severance tax, increase the cigarette tax and to tax e-cigarettes in a manner similar to that of conventional cigarettes. There is also standard reappropriation language in the bill for obligated but unspent Clean Ohio program funds.

[View the bill.](#)

#### ***Columbus Vies for 2016 Political Conventions***

Ohio's "3Cs" - Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati - are among the eight finalists vying for the 2016 Republican National Committee Convention. The other finalists are Denver, Dallas, Kansas City, Las Vegas and Phoenix.

As Columbus vies for the major party political conventions in 2016, Mayor Michael Coleman and economic development leaders recently shared their strategies to-date and future plans for invigorating Ohio's capital city and building its profile. The city is competing alongside Cincinnati and Cleveland as a finalist for the next Republican National Convention, and Columbus also is bidding on the Democrats' convention.



## TOP NEWS IN OHIO

### ***2014 State of the State***

Governor John Kasich's delivered his 2014 State of the State address in Medina, Ohio, on Monday, February 24. During the speech, Kasich touted the success of his job creation efforts with JobsOhio. Additionally, he offered details of what he plans to propose in the upcoming mid-biennium review budget (MBR). Among those items to be included in the budget are an additional personal income tax cut, academic credits for returning veterans, efforts to curtail prescription drug abuse and tobacco addiction, and a continued focus on improving education for Ohioans – pre-K through college. To see the full transcript of the speech, click [here](#).

### ***State + National Unemployment Numbers for January - February 2014***

On March 7, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services announced that Ohio's unemployment rate dropped to 6.9 percent in January, down from 7.1 percent in December, 2014. That same day, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the national unemployment rate was 6.7 percent in February, little changed from 6.6 percent in January.

### ***Joint Economic Development Zones (JEDZs) May Become a Thing of the Past***

HB 289 – In February, the House passed House Bill 289 which would prohibit the formation of or substantial amendment of joint economic development zones beginning on January 1, 2015. It would also prohibit the renewal of JEDZ contracts after December 31, 2014. It also closely regulates JEDZs that are finalized between the bill's effective date and December 31, 2014. The bill has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee.

## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### **HB439 (Whistle-Blower Protection-Public Employees)**

On February 11, Representatives Mike Dovilla and Bill Hayes co-sponsored HB439, a bill to prohibit an appointing authority from taking disciplinary action against certain public employees who report a noncriminal law violation or misuse of public resources to the Inspector General.

### **HB442 (Public Safety Employees-Health Insurance Benefits)**

On February 11, Representative James Butler, Jr. introduced HB442. The legislation would provide health insurance benefits for the surviving spouse and dependents of a police officer, correctional officer, or firefighter killed in the line of duty.

### **HB472 (Mid-Biennium Review Introduced)**

On March 11, Governor Kasich had his "Mid Biennium Review" bill (House Bill 472) introduced. During his term, Kasich has converted what has traditionally been a budget technical corrections bill that is introduced in even-numbered years into a substantive policy bill.

### **SB282 (Municipal Corporations-Income Tax)**

On February 18, Senator Kris Jordan introduced SB282, seeking to prohibit municipal corporations from levying an income tax on nonresidents' compensation for personal services or net profits from a sole proprietorship.



### MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB69** TRAFFIC LAW PHOTO-MONITORING DEVICES (MAAG R, MALLORY D) To prohibit the use of traffic law photo-monitoring devices by municipal corporations, counties, townships, and the State Highway Patrol to detect traffic signal light and speed limit violations.  
*Current Status:* 2/19/2014 - Senate State Government Oversight and Reform, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_69](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_69)
- HB198** TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (BUTLER, JR. J, BURKLEY T) To establish a procedure by which political subdivisions proposing a tax increment financing (TIF) incentive district are required to provide notice to the record owner of each parcel within the proposed incentive district before adopting the TIF resolution.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - REPORTED OUT, House State and Local Government, (Fifth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_198](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_198)
- HB223** RESIDENTIAL FORECLOSURE ACTIONS (GROSSMAN C, CURTIN M) To expedite the foreclosure and transfer of unoccupied, blighted parcels and certain abandoned properties and to make other changes relative to residential foreclosure actions.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED, House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development, (Sixth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_223](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_223)
- HB239** COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM (RUHL M, BRENNER A) To allow the operator of a county transit system to enter into an agreement with a public or private entity for certain services, materials, equipment, or supplies if determined necessary for the generation of operating funds.  
*Current Status:* 1/14/2014 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_239](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_239)
- HB277** STATE-POLITICAL SUBDIVISION ANNEXATIONS (STAUTBERG P) To require that the state or a political subdivision real estate owner be included in determining the number of owners needed to sign a petition for an expedited type-II annexation, unless the real estate is a road or road right-of-way.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - REPORTED OUT, House State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_277](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_277)
- HB279** JOINT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PROCEEDINGS (DAMSCHRODER R, BROWN T) To authorize a joint board of county commissioners to conduct proceedings regarding existing joint county ditches via teleconference or video conference.  
*Current Status:* 1/21/2014 - BILL AMENDED, House State and Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_279](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_279)
- HB289** JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE-DISTRICT (SCHURING K) To require subdivisions to obtain written approval from owners and lessees of real property located within a proposed or existing joint economic development zone (JEDZ) or joint economic development district (JEDD) before approving, amending, or renewing the JEDZ or JEDD contract.  
*Current Status:* 2/26/2014 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 83-7  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_289](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_289)
- HB321** DATAOHIO BOARD (DUFFEY M, HAGAN C) To create the DataOhio Board, and to specify requirements for posting public records online.  
*Current Status:* 3/11/2014 - House Shared Services and Government Efficiency Subcommittee, (Fifth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_321](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_321)





### MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB322** UNIFORM ACCOUNTING SYSTEM (DUFFEY M, HAGAN C) To require the Auditor of State to adopt rules regarding a uniform accounting system for public offices.  
**Current Status:** 3/11/2014 - House Shared Services and Government Efficiency Subcommittee, (Fifth Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_322](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_322)
- HB323** ONLINE PUBLIC DATA CATALOG (DUFFEY M, HAGAN C) To establish an online catalog of public data at data.Ohio.gov.  
**Current Status:** 3/11/2014 - House Shared Services and Government Efficiency Subcommittee, (Fifth Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_323](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_323)
- HB324** LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION EXCHANGE GRANT PROGRAM (DUFFEY M, HAGAN C) To establish the Local Government Information Exchange Grant Program and to make an appropriation.  
**Current Status:** 3/11/2014 - House Shared Services and Government Efficiency Subcommittee, (Fifth Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_324](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_324)
- HB327** COUNTY WATER-SEWER DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS (BURKLEY T) To require interest income from county water and sewer district assessments and interest on assessments to be used only for water and sewer district purposes and to prohibit counties from depositing such interest income in the county general fund.  
**Current Status:** 1/21/2014 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_327](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_327)
- HB336** GASEOUS FUEL VEHICLE CONVERSION PROGRAM (O'BRIEN S, HALL D) To create the Gaseous Fuel Vehicle Conversion Program.  
**Current Status:** 3/11/2014 - House Finance and Appropriations, (Third Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_336](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_336)
- HB337** LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BUDGETING REQUIREMENTS (TERHAR L) To revise budgeting requirements that apply to local governments, mandate that certain actuarial standards be applied in political subdivisions that have independent retirement systems, and authorize the Auditor of State to impose sanctions.  
**Current Status:** 2/25/2014 - House State and Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_337](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_337)
- HB375** SEVERANCE TAX-HORIZONTAL OIL AND GAS WELLS (HUFFMAN M) To levy a severance tax on well owners of oil and gas severed from horizontal wells, to create a nonrefundable income tax credit for the amount of horizontal well severance tax paid, and to repeal a cost recovery assessment imposed on oil and gas well owners.  
**Current Status:** 2/26/2014 - House Ways and Means, (Seventh Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_375](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_375)



### MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB377** CASINO OPERATOR SETTLEMENT FUND (ANIELSKI M) To make changes to the second payment from the Casino Operator Settlement Fund to certain local government entities.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_377](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_377)
- HB380** GENERAL REVENUE FUND-CASH TRANSFER (BOOSE T, GERBERRY R) To require the Director of Budget and Management to transfer cash from the General Revenue Fund to the Local Government Fund and to make an appropriation.  
*Current Status:* 1/14/2014 - Referred to Committee House Finance and Appropriations  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_380](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_380)
- HB386** CREDIT CARD USE-COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BURKLEY T) To expand the work-related expenses that may be paid for by use of a credit card held by a board of county commissioners or the office of another county appointing authority.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_386](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_386)
- HB426** PUBLIC EMPLOYEE WHISTLE-BLOWER (BARBORAK N, PILlich C) To prohibit an appointing authority from taking disciplinary action against public employees who report a noncriminal law violation or misuse of public resources to the Inspector General.  
*Current Status:* 2/11/2014 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_426](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_426)
- HB427** INFRASTRUCTURE FUND-TURNPIKE REVENUE BONDS (BUDISH A) To expand the authorized use of money in the Infrastructure Fund (derived from proceeds from Ohio Turnpike revenue bonds) to include infrastructure projects that consist of the maintenance or repair of existing infrastructure.  
*Current Status:* 2/11/2014 - Referred to Committee House Finance and Appropriations  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_427](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_427)
- HB439** WHISTLE-BLOWER PROTECTION-PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (DOVILLA M, HAYES B) To prohibit an appointing authority from taking disciplinary action against certain public employees who report a noncriminal law violation or misuse of public resources to the Inspector General.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_439](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_439)
- HB442** PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEES-HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS (BUTLER, JR. J) To provide health insurance benefits for the surviving spouse and dependents of a police officer, correctional officer, or firefighter killed in the line of duty.  
*Current Status:* 2/25/2014 - Referred to Committee House Insurance  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_442](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_442)



### MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HCR43** OHIO SUSTAINABLE ENERGY-ABUNDANCE PLAN (BOOSE T, THOMPSON A) To establish a sustainable energy-abundance plan for Ohio to meet future Ohio energy needs with affordable, abundant, and environmentally friendly energy.  
*Current Status:* 2/26/2014 - House Public Utilities, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130\\_HCR\\_43](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130_HCR_43)
- HJR9** GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS ISSUANCE (KUNZE S, BROWN T) Proposing to enact Section 2s of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to permit the issuance of additional general obligation bonds to fund public infrastructure capital improvements.  
*Current Status:* 1/14/2014 - House Finance and Appropriations, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130\\_HJR\\_9](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130_HJR_9)
- SB6** TOWNSHIP FISCAL OFFICERS EDUCATION PROGRAMS (SCHAFFER T) To establish education programs and continuing education requirements for the fiscal officers of townships and municipal corporations.  
*Current Status:* 3/12/2014 - Senate Public Safety, Local Government and Veterans Affairs, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_6](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_6)
- SB34** ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES (JORDAN K) To repeal the requirement that electric distribution utilities and electric services companies provide 25% of their retail power supplies from advanced and renewable energy resources by 2025.  
*Current Status:* 2/12/2014 - Senate Public Utilities, (Fourth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_34](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_34)
- SB53** MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTRAR (KEARNEY E) To require the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and all deputy registrars to accept credit and debit cards for transactions of more than ten dollars.  
*Current Status:* 1/28/2014 - Senate Transportation, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_53](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_53)
- SB58** RETAIL ELECTRIC SERVICE (SEITZ B) To review and possibly modify the energy efficiency, peak demand reduction, and alternative energy resource provisions established by Ohio law governing competitive retail electric service.  
*Current Status:* 2/19/2014 - Senate Public Utilities, (Seventh Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_58](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_58)
- SB59** EDUCATION ENERGY COUNCIL (BEAGLE B) To authorize an eligible regional council of governments to establish itself as an education energy council for the purpose of issuing debt to pay for school district energy purchases.  
*Current Status:* 2/19/2014 - Senate Public Utilities, (Fourth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_59](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_59)
- SB93** OPEN MEETINGS ACT (JONES S) To require that further information be stated in motions to hold executive sessions under the Open Meetings Act, to expand the fees and expenses that may be recovered for violations of the Act, and to make other changes to the Act.  
*Current Status:* 1/22/2014 - Senate State Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_93](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_93)





### MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- SB155** JOINT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BOARD (BURKE D) To authorize a joint board of county commissioners to conduct proceedings regarding existing joint county ditches via teleconference or video conference.  
*Current Status:* 2/18/2014 - REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED, House State and Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_155](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_155)
- SB194** MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLES-SCOOTERS (SEITZ B) To allow certain motor-driven cycles and motor scooters to be parked on a sidewalk so long as the vehicles do not impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic.  
*Current Status:* 2/28/2014 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_194](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_194)
- SB251** CASINO OPERATOR SETTLEMENT FUND (PATTON T) To make changes to the second payment from the Casino Operator Settlement Fund to certain local government entities.  
*Current Status:* 1/29/2014 - Senate State Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_251](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_251)
- SB282** MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS-INCOME TAX (JORDAN K) To prohibit municipal corporations from levying an income tax on nonresidents' compensation for personal services or net profits from a sole proprietorship.  
*Current Status:* 2/19/2014 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_282](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_282)
- SCR25** GREEN BUILDING RATING STANDARDS (UECKER J) To urge, for Ohio state agencies and other government entities, the use of green building rating systems, codes, or standards that are consistent with state energy efficiency and environmental performance objectives.  
*Current Status:* 2/26/2014 - ADOPTED BY SENATE; Vote 22-10  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130\\_SCR\\_25](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130_SCR_25)
- SJR6** GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS ISSUANCE (BACON K, MANNING G) Proposing to enact Section 2s of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to permit the issuance of additional general obligation bonds to fund public infrastructure capital improvements.  
*Current Status:* 1/23/2014 - Filed with Secretary of State  
*State Bill Page:* [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130\\_SJR\\_6](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130_SJR_6)



## STATE + FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### State

#### *Data Ohio Initiative*

On February 25, Nancy Reger, MORPC's Director of Regional Data & Mapping, testified before the House Shared Services and Government Efficiency Subcommittee in support of the following bills introduced by Representatives Mike Duffey and Christina Hagen:

- » [HB321](#) – To create the DataOhio Board, and to specify requirements for posting public records online
- » [HB323](#) – To establish an online catalog of public data at [data.ohio.gov](http://data.ohio.gov)
- » [HB324](#) – To establish the Local Government Information Exchange Grant Program and to make an appropriation

MORPC did not take a stance on HB322, which would require the Auditor of the State to adopt rules regarding a uniform accounting system for public offices, as this is not an area of expertise for the agency.

Along with support testimony, MORPC made a recommendation for language to be added to allow other entities, like Regional Planning Commissions to be eligible to apply for the Local Government Information Exchange Grants to assist members or groups of members in getting their data online. This amendment was proposed by Rep. Duffey at the March 11 subcommittee hearing, where the bill was referred on to the House State and Local Government Committee.

#### *Medicaid Expansion/Reform*

The Ohio Department of Medicaid released numbers that showed 23,156 Ohioans newly eligible under the Medicaid program gained coverage in January, the first month of expansion under the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA). Under ACA provisions adopted by the Kasich administration, Ohioans up to 138 percent of the federal poverty line are now eligible for Medicaid benefits. The controversial move by the Kasich administration was approved by the Controlling Board in October, and the Ohio Supreme Court later upheld the move when it threw out a lawsuit by Republican lawmakers.

#### *Elections 2014*

In late February, Secretary of State Jon Husted issued a directive setting the early, in-person absentee voting schedule for the primary and General Election that includes the boards' being open for voting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays for the four weeks before Election Day, and on the last two Saturdays before the election from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. In issuing the directive, Husted said that he was implementing the bipartisan proposal by the Ohio Association of Elections Officials (OAEI).

#### *Ballot Issues*

On February 19, the Ohio Ballot Board approved the arguments for and against as well as the ballot language for State Issue 1, the renewal of the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) that will appear on the May 6 primary ballot.

The committee that will push Issue 1 on the May 6 primary ballot, Strong Ohio Communities, was announced that same week and will include AFL-CIO President Tim Burga, Ohio Chamber of Commerce President Andrew Doehrel, Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman and Hamilton County Commissioner Greg Hartmann as its honorary chairs.

For more information on Issue 1, and to see additional pending statewide ballot issues click [here](#).



## STATE + FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### *Transportation*

In early-February, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) announced that \$16 million will be provided to local communities for transportation improvements throughout the state. ODOT said they will be spending the next few months working with local communities to address funding needs for two specialized transportation programs: a small city program and a local bridge replacement program.

### *State Capital Budget Likely to be Introduced Soon*

Following speculation that the State Capital Budget might not be taken up by the General Assembly until a date as late as the post-general election “lame duck” session, it appears likely that the legislation will be introduced in March and be finalized before the Ohio’s May 6 primary.

### *Green Building Resolution Passes Senate*

On February 26, the Senate voted 22-10 to approve SCR25, which urges use of green building standards compliant with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) process, in response to concern about recent changes in the latest Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Sen. Joe Uecker (R-Loveland), the sponsor, said new LEED rules that urge avoidance of certain chemicals could affect such common construction materials as foam insulation and vinyl.

Sen. Lou Gentile (D-Steubenville) said the resolution might send the wrong message that Ohio is “going backward” on green building projects, and noted that Ohio leads the nation in the number of LEED-certified school projects.

Sen. Chris Widener (R-Springfield) said the resolution does not outright block the new LEED standards, but simply says they need to comply with ANSI standards first or be subject to public comment and review through the normal rule-making process.

MORPC joined a diverse coalition of businesses and organizations to oppose SCR25 and signed onto the coalition’s letter sent to Senate President Faber and House Speaker Batchelder. MORPC will continue to follow this issue as it is now reviewed in the House.

### *Federal*

### *Raising Minimum Wage*

On March 4, President Obama sent his proposed [Fiscal Year 2015 Budget](#) to Congress, which included a provision to raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10. According to a January, 2014, Pew Research Center survey, approximately 73% of Americans would support the increase. To view the full survey results, click [here](#).

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recently issued a report saying that raising the minimum wage could lift 900,000 people out of poverty, but leave 500,000 people without a job at all.

A recent report from the Center for American Progress (CAP) says 88,580 Ohioans would no longer need to rely on the federal Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps, if the minimum wage rose to \$10.10 per hour. To read the CAP report, visit <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/MinWage-report.pdf>.



# Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

## Monthly Legislative Update

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