

**OHIO CONFERENCE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

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OCCD Legislative Committee

The following is a summary of recent Ohio General Assembly activity relating to economic development matters through January 29, 2025.

LEGISLATION RECENTLY ENACTED

House Bill 238 (From prior General Assembly. Passed December 18, 2024; signed by the Governor January 8, 2025; effective April 9, 2025.) This Bill, among other provisions, revises the membership of the Ohio Housing Finance Agency by adding as nonvoting members two Senate members (one from each major political party) to be appointed by the Senate President, and two House of Representatives members (one from each major political party) to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

House Bill 257 (From prior General Assembly. Passed December 18, 2024; signed by the Governor January 8, 2025; effective April 9, 2025.) This Bill authorizes certain public bodies to meet virtually; but does not permit virtual meetings or a member of the public body from attending virtually if the meeting or hearing involves a vote to approve a major nonroutine expenditure or significant hiring decision, as defined by the public body's policy, or to propose, approve, or vote on a tax issue or increase, or if the board's members are compensated (excluding compensation for qualified expenses) for their position as board members or elected to their positions by a vote of the general public.

House Bill 315 (From prior General Assembly. Passed December 18, 2024; signed by the Governor January 2, 2025; effective April 2, 2025.) This Bill, among other provisions, specifies which body serves as the organizational board of commissioners of a new community authority if more than one body is eligible; modifies various township newspaper publication requirements to allow publication via the print or digital edition of a newspaper of general circulation, the official public notice website, or via the township's website and social media account; eliminates procedures for the designation of a county lead entity under the Brownfield Remediation Program and, instead, revises what is considered a lead entity by eliminating the stipulation that a lead entity must be a grant award recipient and the responsible party with whom

the Department of Development executes a grant agreement for grant funds, and by clarifying that a lead entity means a county, township, municipal corporation, port authority, conservancy district, park district or other similar park authority, county land reutilization corporation, or organization for profit; regarding current law that allows money appropriated to counties that is unspent after a calendar year to be made available for grants statewide on a first-come, first-served basis, eliminates the requirement that those grants be limited to 75% of a qualifying project's total cost; prohibits the Department of Development, in awarding a historic rehabilitation tax credit, from considering whether a project will benefit an economically distressed area; allows, under certain conditions, a cooperative economic development agreement (CEDA) to include a new type of agreement that would allow a political subdivision's regulations to apply within territory wherein the regulations would not otherwise apply; and specifically includes road and bridge improvements and regulations as types of government improvements and services that CEDAs should be liberally construed to allow.

House Bill 496 (From prior General Assembly. Passed December 18, 2024; signed by the Governor January 8, 2025; effective April 9, 2025.) This Bill revises the law governing property and lodging taxes and county auditors. Among other provisions, the Bill modifies information a county auditor must certify in the process of submitting a property tax levy to voters, including information appearing on election notices and ballot language, as follows: requires rounding estimated revenue to the nearest \$1 rather than the nearest \$1,000; requires this estimate and rate estimates for bond and fixed-sum levies to be based on valuations on the last available tax list rather than a possible estimate; and requires certifying the residential/agricultural effective rate of renewed or extended levies based on the last known rate, as opposed to an estimated effective rate that assumes the levy is approved.

House Bill 497 (From prior General Assembly. Passed December 18, 2024; signed by the Governor January 8, 2025; effective April 9, 2025.) This Bill makes various changes regarding county law. Among other provisions, the Bill exempts county improvement projects for minor repairs from the requirement to obtain detailed plans, bills, specifications, and cost estimates from an architect or engineer; modifies the approval process for county courthouse and jail projects with an estimated cost of \$75,000 or less; increases, from \$1,000 to \$20,000, the threshold at which a county prosecutor is required to approve contracts related to county improvements; simplifies the process a county must follow to donate unneeded property; increases threshold amounts, from \$50,000 to \$75,000, related to the county notice requirement for purchases, leases, and construction contracts, and related to guaranty and bonding requirements for county contracts; prohibits a contract entered into by a county for the procurement of goods or services from including certain terms and conditions; and permits a county to publish required county advertisements in only the digital edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the county, or only on the county's website and social media account.

LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE HOUSE

N/A

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE

House Bill 28 (Introduced January 28, 2025; not yet referred to House Committee.) This Bill would eliminate the authority to levy replacement property tax levies.

LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE SENATE

N/A

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE

Senate Bill 5 (Introduced January 22, 2025; referred to Senate Judiciary Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would provide for the expedited removal of unauthorized occupants from residential property and to prohibit the use and sale of fraudulent deeds.

Senate Bill 22 (Introduced January 22, 2025; referred to Senate Finance Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would authorize a refundable income tax credit or rebate for homeowners and renters whose property taxes or a portion of their rent exceed five per cent of their income.

Senate Bill 29 (Introduced January 22, 2025; referred to Senate Local Government Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would allow two or more municipalities to create a joint economic development district without involving a township.

Senate Bill 42 (Introduced January 28, 2025; referred to Senate Ways and Means Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would authorize local governments to create residential stability zones where homeowners may qualify for a partial property tax exemption.

Senate Bill 45 (Introduced January 28, 2025; referred to Senate Local Government Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates or charges.

Senate Bill 54 (Introduced January 28, 2025; referred to Senate Workforce Development Committee on January 29, 2025.) This Bill would establish a certification for specialty residential construction contractors.