Appropriations

H.B. 54

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the LSC Budget in Brief, As Enacted, Comparison Document, As Enacted, Appropriation Spreadsheet, and Greenbook, all of which are available on LSC's website, lsc.ohio.gov, under "Budget Central")

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Stewart

Effective date: June 30, 2025; certain provisions effective March 31, 2025; provisions governing Auditor of State access to ODOT systems effective October 1, 2025; replica motor vehicle provisions effective December 27, 2025

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Traffic control devices

- Modifies numerous phrases associated with traffic control devices to conform Ohio's laws to the federal regulations required in the federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- Expands the types of highway traffic signal indications for pedestrians and vehicles, including bicycles and public transit vehicles.
- Prohibits parking in a bicycle lane.
- Makes numerous conforming and technical changes.

General management

Audit access

- Requires the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to give the Auditor of State and independent accountants/consultants access to ODOT's systems during an audit, including a performance audit.

Disciplinary actions

- Requires ODOT to take immediate disciplinary action against a career professional service employee whose conduct is egregious, without giving that employee an opportunity to improve performance by means of a written performance improvement plan.
- Makes permissive, rather than mandatory, that ODOT place a career professional service employee on a six-month written performance improvement plan for nonegregious, unsatisfactory performance.

Transportation Review Advisory Council

- Eliminates the obsolete requirement that the defunct Ohio Public Expenditure Council provide recommendations to the Governor for appointment of a member to the Transportation Review Advisory Council.

Procurement authority

- Expands the ODOT Director's procurement authority to include services along with supplies and products, thereby aligning it with the Department of Administrative Services' similar authority on behalf of other state agencies.
- Eliminates antiquated procedures from the procurement process.

Division of Advanced Air Mobility

- Requires the ODOT Director to create a Division of Advanced Air Mobility within ODOT, specifies the Division's objectives, and authorizes it to work with other federal, state, and local entities to accomplish them.

Highway use and obstructions

Using or occupying a state road or highway

- Prohibits any person from knowingly using or occupying a portion of a state highway if the ODOT Director revokes that person's permit to use or occupy it.
- Imposes a fine of up to $500 for a first offense and up to $2,500 for a subsequent offense for violating the prohibition or any other provision of law governing permits for occupying a road or highway.

Abandoned telecommunications and utility structures

- Requires ODOT to make reasonable attempts to identify the owner of an abandoned telecommunications or utility structure occupying a road, state highway, or right-of-way.
- Allows ODOT to remove the abandoned structure and to retain a third party to remove it if the reasonable attempts fail to identify the owner.

Removing obstructions from state highways

- Imposes a fine of up to $100 for each day that a person knowingly fails to remove or relocate an obstruction from a state highway when required to do so.

Contracts and bidding

Chip and fog seal projects

- Authorizes ODOT to chip seal or fog seal an asphalt surface without using competitive bidding if certain parameters are met.
- Requires the ODOT Director to notify the board of county commissioners or board of township trustees of a chip seal or fog seal project at least 30 days before its being competitively bid or ODOT starts the project by force account.

Indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts

- Makes permanent the ODOT Director's authority to enter into indefinite delivery indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts.
- Authorizes IDIQ contracts only for highway maintenance limited to guardrail, highway lighting, and traffic signal maintenance.
- Expands the number of IDIQ contracts that may be active from two each fiscal year to 24 (two for each of the 12 ODOT districts).
- Requires the Director to prepare bidding documents, establish contract forms, determine contract terms and conditions, develop and implement a work order process, and take any other action necessary to fulfill the Director's duties related to IDIQ contracts.

Maintenance agreements

- Binds ODOT to highway maintenance and repair written agreements entered into by its predecessor, the Department of Highways.

Bidder prequalification

- Requires a contractor to meet the appropriate bidding capacity and other qualifications necessary to be awarded an ODOT contract at the time the contract is awarded, rather than at the time the bid is submitted for consideration.
- Changes the deadline for a contractor to submit the required certificate of compliance with affirmative action programs to 180 days before the contract is awarded, rather than 180 days before the opening of bids.
- Increases the threshold from $5 million to $10 million for determining the format of the financial verifications required from the bidding contractor to obtain a certificate of qualification of bidding capacity.

Construction contract adjustments

- Increases the amount below which a change order or extra work contract is not subject to the statutory monetary thresholds from $25,000 to $50,000.

Contract performance bond: railroad indemnification

- Removes the requirement that an ODOT contractor indemnify a railroad company against any damage that may result by reason of the contractor's negligence in making an improvement to a grade separation.

Regional transit authorities (RTAs)

- Increases the threshold, from $100,000 to $250,000 (the threshold set in federal law) that triggers the requirement that an RTA board approve a contract, but allows the board to require board approval for contracts under that amount.

- Requires an RTA in Montgomery County to contract with one or more local law enforcement entities to enforce laws and ensure safety at or in the vicinity of its centralized transportation hub if the hub has six or more service routes.
- Expands a Greater Cleveland RTA police officer's jurisdiction to include paratransit vehicles, vehicles for maintenance and support, and railcars and routes, transit zones, bus lanes, bus layover areas, bus loops, transit centers, bus shelters, bus stops, rail stations, and rail lines that are owned, operated, or leased by the RTA.

Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission

- Clarifies that the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission (OTIC) has sovereign immunity, in the same manner as other political subdivisions of the state.

Assistance to villages

- Requires the ODOT Director to provide the following types of assistance to a village, for state highways within the village, when requested by the village's legislative authority:
  - Snow and ice removal;
  - Road salt application; and
  - Grass, weed, and other natural growth removal.

Repeal of required interchanges; NOACA study

- Repeals the requirement that ODOT construct certain interstate interchanges, which applied only to a location on the border of Medina and Cuyahoga counties.
- Requires the ODOT Director, in consultation with or led by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency, to continue a study to develop a traffic congestion management strategic plan and submit a related report.

Pavement selection analysis

- Requires ODOT to contract with a neutral third party to conduct a study of ODOT's pavement selection process and different pavement materials.
- Requires the ODOT Director to appoint an advisory council to recommend the neutral third party, oversee the study, and make final recommendations based on the study.

Road safety pilot

- Requires the ODOT Director to establish the Road Safety Pilot Program to assess speed compliance in construction zones.
- Allows ODOT to use various means to slow traffic speed in the construction zones, including speed monitoring devices.

I-73 feasibility study

- Requires the ODOT Director to conduct a feasibility study for an Interstate Route 73 corridor, primarily along current U.S. Route 23, stretching from Toledo to Chesapeake, Ohio.

U.S. Route 23 and I-71 connector

- Requires ODOT and OTIC to complete a joint plan, by September 30, 2025, regarding the feasibility of connecting U.S. Route 23 to I-71 through expanding a current highway or creating a new freeway or toll road, and submit it to the General Assembly.

Commercial motor vehicle parking

- For FYs 2026 and 2027, allows ODOT to close a rest area only if the parking lot remains available for commercial motor vehicles.

Turnpike interchange feasibility study

- Requires OTIC to complete a feasibility study by December 31, 2026, regarding a new interchange and access point to the Ohio Turnpike at approximately mile marker 100, near Clyde, Ohio, in Sandusky County.

Workforce Mobility Partnership Program

- Continues the Ohio Workforce Mobility Partnership Program, which is administered by ODOT and is generally designed to expand transit transportation options between different service areas and between rural and urban locations.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Motor vehicle registration

Replica vehicles

- Authorizes a person to register a replica motor vehicle (which is a vehicle that intends to replicate another motor vehicle that is at least 25 years old), for limited operation on public roads and highways.
- Requires the owner of a replica motor vehicle to receive a certificate of title that indicates that the vehicle is a replica vehicle and establishes procedures for issuing the certificate.
- Exempts replica motor vehicles from certain requirements (e.g., emissions, noise control, and fuel usage) that were not in effect in the year of manufacture that the vehicle replicates.

E-Check programmatic changes

- Creates an alternative, parallel system by which an owner of a motor vehicle may comply with the E-Check Program without submitting to an E-Check emissions test by obtaining an alternative emissions certificate (AEC).

- Postpones the requirement to implement the alternative emissions certification program until the U.S. EPA approves the program under the federal Clean Air Act.
- Requires the Director of Environmental Protection, when the program is implemented, to do the following:
  - Issue an AEC when the owner of a motor vehicle subject to E-Check submits an attestation form affirming that the motor vehicle complies with all Ohio and U.S. laws governing motor vehicle emissions;
  - Deliver an AEC within 30 business days after receiving the attestation form by mail and within five business days after electronic receipt;
  - Reject an attestation form for various reasons, including that an attestation form contains false information; and
  - Send a notice letter to an owner who submits an attestation form containing false information and allow the owner to correct the form.
- Requires an owner to have an emissions test performed on the owner's motor vehicle and obtain an inspection certificate, instead of an AEC, if an attestation form is rejected and not corrected.
- Requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to accept an AEC in lieu of an inspection certificate for the purpose of registering a motor vehicle in an E-Check county.
- Requires the Registrar to ensure that owners registering motor vehicles in E-Check counties receive information about the AEC process.
- Expands the new motor vehicle exemption under E-Check so that it applies to motor vehicles six years old or newer, rather than four years old or newer.
- Creates a new exemption for hybrid motor vehicles that are seven years old or newer.

Rental vehicle registration

- Exempts the operator of a rental vehicle from the prohibition against driving without a valid motor vehicle registration under certain conditions.
- Places the liability for fees, fines, and penalties arising from the violation on the registered owner of the rental vehicle.

Driver's licenses and state ID cards

CDL skills test fee for third-party testers

- Removes the fee cap of $115 for the commercial driver's license skills test when the test is given by an authorized third-party tester.

Voter registration with BMV transaction

- Requires the Registrar or a deputy registrar to offer voter registration to a customer only if (1) the customer presents proof of U.S. citizenship or (2) the customer has previously presented proof of U.S. citizenship to the Registrar or any deputy registrar.

Repeal of enhanced driver's licenses and ID cards

- Repeals all laws related to an enhanced commercial driver's license, enhanced driver's license, and enhanced state ID card.

Limited term license applicants

- Requires an adult limited term license applicant (generally a noncitizen with legal presence in the U.S.) to successfully complete a driver training course and 50 hours of practice driving accompanied by a licensed adult prior to first issuance of the license, with certain exceptions.

Traffic laws

Portable signal preemption device

- Authorizes the operator of a highway maintenance vehicle, when used for snow removal and owned/operated by a political subdivision, to use a portable signal preemption device (i.e., a device that can change a traffic light from red to green out of sequence) when responding to a Level 2 or Level 3 emergency weather event.

Traffic cameras

- Eliminates the authority of counties and townships to operate traffic camera programs.

Preschool school zone

- Expands the statutory authorization for the creation of a school zone for certain preschools that are located on a street or highway with a speed limit of 45 m.p.h. or more to include streets or highways within ODOT's jurisdiction.

Student transportation

Alternative vehicles

- Authorizes school districts, community schools, and chartered nonpublic schools to own and operate, or contract with a vendor that supplies, motor vehicles originally manufactured to transport up to 12 passengers, including the driver, for student transportation.

Daily pre-trip school bus inspections

- Eliminates and precludes specified equipment checks that were previously required by rule for daily pre-trip inspections of school buses.
- Requires the State Highway Patrol to still maintain checks of that equipment in their annual school bus inspections.

Adaptive mobility vehicle sales

- Expands who may sell a used adaptive mobility vehicle to include both a licensed used motor vehicle dealer and a leasing motor vehicle dealer.
- Exempts an adaptive mobility dealer and a remanufacturer owned and operated by the same company and engaged in business at the same location from the general requirement to agree to be jointly, severally, and personally liable for any liability arising from their engagement in business at the same location.

Toll agreements with other states

- Allows the Director of Public Safety to enter into agreements with a private toll collection facility in another state to enforce toll collections.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Hazardous materials routes

- Prohibits the Public Utilities Commission (PUCO) from designating the portion of State Route 315 between I-270 and U.S. Route 23 as a hazardous materials route under federal law.

Positioning wayside detector systems

- Creates separate spacing requirements for wayside detector system (WDS) installation based on the type of railroad carrier, as defined in federal regulation, as follows:
  - For a Class I Carrier railroad, up to ten miles;
  - For a Class II Carrier railroad, up to 25 miles;
  - For a Class III Carrier railroad, up to 35 miles.
- Allows, under certain circumstances, for each railroad carrier class to place the next adjacent WDS up to five miles outside the statutory WDS spacing requirement.
- Requires Class II and Class III Carriers, prior to deviation, to submit a written explanation to PUCO for the deviation.
- Exempts any railroad track owned or leased by a Class II or Class III Carrier that has a speed limit of 10 m.p.h. or lower from the WDS spacing requirements.
- Requires PUCO, by December 31, 2028, to complete a review of train derailments in Ohio using certain statistics over the course of three years proceeding from June 30, 2025, and submit it to the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House, and the Minority leaders of both chambers.
- Recodifies other WDS provisions.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- Removes notary requirements for a variety of watercraft or outboard motor title documents when a registered watercraft dealer is a party to the transfer of that watercraft or outboard motor.
- Removes the requirements that a power of attorney (POA) be notarized when a person grants a registered watercraft dealer, or the dealer's agent, a limited POA related to the transfer of a watercraft or outboard motor title.

DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

- Continues the 1% fuel dealer and 0.5% retailer shrinkage allowances in effect biennially since FY 2008, superseding the 3% and 1% allowances in permanent codified law.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

- Establishes a compensation amount for the position of House Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore, starting at $99,903.90 for 2025.
- Removes the compensation amount for the position of House Assistant Majority Whip.
- Specifies the compensation amount for the position of House Majority Whip is for one or more members.

H.B. 80

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the LSC Budget in Brief, As Enacted, Comparison Document, As Enacted, Appropriation Spreadsheet, and Greenbook, all of which are available on LSC's website, lsc.ohio.gov, under "Budget Central.")

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Stewart

Effective date: June 27, 2025

- Appropriates funds for the Industrial Commission for the biennium ending June 30, 2027.

H.B. 81

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the LSC Budget in Brief, As Enacted, Comparison Document, As Enacted, Appropriation Spreadsheet, and Greenbook, all of which are available on LSC's website, lsc.ohio.gov, under "Budget Central")

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Stewart

Effective date: Appropriations effective June 27, 2025; other provisions effective September 26, 2025

Appropriations

- Appropriates funds for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) for the biennium ending June 30, 2027.

Prison Industries Enhancement Certification Program

- Makes changes to the Prison Industries Enhancement Certification Program, including requiring an injured incarcerated worker to request the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) to file a claim with BWC on the worker's behalf and having DRC cover claim costs.

PEO and AEO reporting and disclosure

- Removes the requirement that a self-insuring professional employer organization (PEO) or alternate employer organization (AEO) submit payroll and claim information about a former client employer to the BWC Administrator after the PEO or AEO terminates a workers' compensation lease with the former client employer.
- Eliminates the Administrator's authority to require a self-insuring PEO or AEO to submit payroll and claim information at additional times after the initial submission if the Administrator determines additional submissions are necessary.
- Eliminates the Administrator's authority to revoke or refuse to renew a PEO's or AEO's status as a self-insuring employer for failing to submit required information.

Public Employment Risk Reduction Program

- Excludes any person incarcerated in specified facilities from the Public Employment Risk Reduction Program (PERRP).
- Eliminates requirements under PERRP for public employers that employ public health care workers regarding the use of needleless systems and other safe needle devices to reduce exposure incidents that risk spreading bloodborne pathogens that comply with federal bloodborne pathogen standards.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Administrator adopt a rule and Ohio employment risk reduction standard to prevent exposure incidents.
- Eliminates the word "scheduled" to describe workplace inspections and investigations that the Administrator must conduct under the PERRP.

Rebuttable presumption of intoxication

- Updates a cross reference to federal regulations containing cutoff concentration levels for specific substances, the presence of which create a rebuttable presumption that a workers' compensation claimant's injury or occupational disease was caused by the claimant's intoxication.

Reimbursements to secondary payers

- Modifies the circumstances under which the Administrator may reimburse the federal Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Ohio Department of Medicaid, or a medical assistance provider to whom the Department has assigned a right of recovery.

Prosthetic devices

- Allows the Industrial Commission or the Administrator to order a payment to purchase, repair, or replace a claimant's prosthetic device if the purchase, repair, or replacement is necessary due to an amputation or loss resulting from an allowed injury or occupational disease.
- Specifies that the order does not extend the period during which the Commission or Administrator may modify or change a former finding or order in a claim.
- Requires a payment to purchase, repair, or replace a prosthetic device to be charged against the Surplus Fund Account if the claimant's injury or occupational disease caused a loss enumerated in a list of scheduled losses in continuing law, even if a payment for the loss itself has not yet been ordered.

BWC Board of Directors

- Eliminates the requirement that the BWC Board of Directors meet annually with the Governor to discuss the Administrator's performance of duties.
- Requires forfeiture of a BWC Board member's position for missing nine or more Board meetings in a 12-month period.
- Eliminates the requirement that the BWC's annual internal operating budget be submitted to the BWC Board for approval.

Status of officials regarding the State Insurance Fund

- Specifies that BWC Board members, the Administrator, and BWC's Chief Investment Officer are fiduciaries, rather than trustees, of the State Insurance Fund.

Safety and hygiene museums

- Eliminates the requirement that the Administrator establish safety and hygiene museums.

H.B. 96

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the LSC Budget in Brief, As Enacted, Comparison Document, As Enacted, Appropriation Spreadsheet, and Greenbook, all of which are available on LSC's website, lsc.ohio.gov, under "Budget Central.")

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Stewart

Effective date: Operating appropriations and certain other items effective June 30, 2025; most items effective September 30, 2025; some items effective on other dates; contains item vetoes; one vetoed item overridden as of December 31, 2025.

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ACCOUNTANCY BOARD

- Reduces the percentage of owners who must hold an Ohio permit or foreign certificate for a public accounting firm to register in Ohio.
- Changes references to ownership interests in a public accounting firm from "equity interest" to "equity interest or shares."

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Exempt employee salary schedules

- Increases pay for an exempt state employee paid in accordance with Schedule E-1 by approximately 4.5% in FY 2026 and 3% in FY 2027, and raises the maximums in the pay ranges of Schedule E-2 by similar amounts.
- Codifies modifications to exempt state employee pay scales made by the DAS Director pursuant to H.B. 2 of the 135th General Assembly.

State employee work location (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Would have required each state agency to develop, by October 15, 2025, a plan for its state employees to report to the agency's worksite or another location designated by the agency during the time the employees are performing their duties for the agency (**VETOED**).
- Would have required each state agency, beginning January 1, 2026, to require its state employees to report to the agency's worksite or another location in accordance with that plan (**VETOED**).
- Would have prohibited any state employee, beginning January 1, 2026, from working from the employee's place of residence unless an exception applied (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed a state agency to adopt a policy allowing an appointing authority or the appointing authority's designee to approve a state employee to work from the employee's residence or other off-site location under certain circumstances (**VETOED**).
- Makes state employees' ability to work at a designated worksite not an appropriate subject of collective bargaining for future collective bargaining agreements, and has policies regarding state employee work location prevail over a conflicting provision in a future collective bargaining agreement (**PARTIALLY VETOED**).
- Would have required state agencies, by December 31, 2026, to develop a plan described above to submit an implementation report to the DAS Director that describes compliance with that plan (**VETOED**).

DAS personnel

- Eliminates the DAS Director's authority to designate individuals in or out of the service of the state to serve as examiners or assistants under the Director's direction, while retaining the Director's authority to appoint examiners, inspectors, clerks, and other assistants as necessary to carry out the law.
- Eliminates a requirement that the DAS Director, examiners, inspectors, clerks, and assistants must receive reimbursement for necessary traveling and other expenses incurred in the actual discharge of their official duties.

DAS services

- Eliminates the ability of a state-supported college or university or a municipality to use services and facilities furnished by DAS to provide and maintain payroll services and state merit standards.
- Eliminates the DAS Director's ability to enter into an agreement with any county, municipality, or other political subdivision to furnish DAS services and facilities in the administration of a merit program or other functions related to human resources, including providing competitive examinations for positions in the classified service.
- Eliminates the DAS Director's ability to designate the municipal civil service commission of the largest city within a county as the Director's agent to carry out designated provisions of law administered by the Director within that county.
- Eliminates the ability of the DAS Director to incur necessary expenses for stationery, printing, and other supplies incident to DAS business.

Disability leave

- Modifies the disability leave program for eligible state employees, including regarding rule adoption requirements, eligibility, approval, and appeals.

Pay for jury service or court attendance

- Prohibits requiring a state employee to surrender compensation or reimbursement paid to the employee for serving on a jury or appearing before a court, commission, board, or other legally constituted body when compelled to do so.

Paid leave for emergency medical or firefighting service

- Increases, from 40 to 120 hours, the amount of paid leave a state employee may use each calendar year to provide emergency medical or firefighting services.
- Expands the reasons for which a state employee may use the leave to include attending a training or continuing education program that relates to providing emergency medical or firefighting services.

Procurement processes

- Expands the definition of "Buy Ohio products" in procurement law to include any product that includes semiconductors produced by a company with a significant Ohio economic presence.
- Requires that a state consortium, established by the Chancellor of Higher Education, follow rules adopted by DAS for giving preference to Buy Ohio products, when making a purchase with appropriated funds of any product that includes semiconductors.
- Eliminates the Division of State Printing within DAS, and subjects state printing contracts to DAS procurement law generally.

Prohibited applications on state systems

- Expands the types of social media applications that are prohibited on state agency computers, networks, and devices.

Surplus supplies and nonprofit organizations

- Revises the authority of the DAS Director to dispose of surplus or excess supplies to a nonprofit corporation.

Software purchases

- Specifies prohibited provisions with respect to a contract for purchasing software.

Sharing legal documents

- Requires the Attorney General to share certain privileged and confidential documents with the DAS Office of Risk Management.

9-1-1

- Requires all public safety answering points (PSAPs) that answer 9-1-1 calls for service in Ohio to be subject to the PSAP operations rules.
- Repeals the law that would have reduced the Next Generation 9-1-1 access fee applied to certain communication services in Ohio from 40¢ to 25¢ beginning October 1, 2025.
- Raises the Next Generation 9-1-1 access fee from 40¢ to 60¢.
- Revises the allocation of the collected Next Generation 9-1-1 access fee amounts.

Entrepreneur in residence pilot

- Eliminates the entrepreneur in residence pilot program.

State civil service

- Replaces the requirement that the DAS Director and the State Personnel Board of Review (SPBR) exercise former functions, powers, and duties given to the State Civil Service Commission with a requirement that the DAS Director and SPBR exercise functions, powers, and duties actually given to the Commission on or before January 1, 1959.
- Eliminates the requirement that any reference to the Commission in law or rule be considered to refer to DAS, the DAS Director, or SPBR.

Flag display on state buildings and grounds (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Prohibits a state agency or any entity that manages the grounds or buildings under the control of a state agency (except for the Ohio Statehouse and its grounds) from displaying on the grounds or building any flag except for any of the following:
  - The official state flag;

- The U.S. flag;
- The POW/MIA flag; or
- Any flag approved by the Governor or the Governor's designee, as stipulated in the Governor's veto message.

- Would have limited such a state agency or entity from displaying any other flag to one containing its official logo, so long as the flag was approved by the Governor or the Governor's designee (**PARTIALLY VETOED**).

State real property study (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Requires DAS to issue a biennial report on all real property owned or leased by the state or a state.
- Would have required DAS to conduct a comprehensive survey of each property (**VETOED**).

DEPARTMENT OF AGING

Provider certification

- Expands as a provider agreement to include one that a services provider may enter into, or renew, with either the Department of Aging or a PASSPORT administrative agency.
- Revises one of the disciplinary actions that the Department may take against a certified provider, by specifying that the action requires submission to the Department of both, instead of either, a plan of correction and evidence of compliance with requirements the Department has identified.
- Specifically includes a direct care provider in the law permitting the Department not to hold a hearing when taking disciplinary action against a provider's certification, when a provider's principal owner or manager has pled guilty to a disqualifying offense.
- Authorizes the Department to send notices regarding disciplinary actions by electronic mail.

Community-based long-term care providers – records checks

- Excludes ambulette drivers, attorneys, persons acting at the direction of attorneys, and certain participant-directed providers from criminal records checks and database reviews for persons applying for, or employed in, direct-care positions with community-based long-term care services providers under Department-administered programs.
- Eliminates a consumer meeting certain conditions from the law's "responsible party" definition.
- Excludes ambulette drivers, attorneys, and persons acting at the direction of attorneys from the requirement that the Department take certain actions based on criminal records check and database review results when issuing or awarding community-based long-term care services certificates, contracts, or grants to self-employed providers.

Electronic visit verification

- Exempts providers utilizing electronic visit verification systems from the law requiring each provider under contract with the Department of Aging, Developmental Disabilities, Health, or Job and Family Services to provide home care services to home care dependent adults to have a system in place that monitors the delivery of those services.
- Eliminates obsolete law requiring the departments to submit a report in 2005 addressing how self-employed providers may be required to adopt a monitoring system.

PASSPORT aides

- Eliminates law prohibiting the Department from requiring a PASSPORT program home health aide to complete more hours of pre-service training or annual in-service training than is required by federal law.

- Instead, extends that prohibition to PASSPORT program personal care aides, by prohibiting the Department from requiring such an aide to complete more pre-service and annual in-service training hours than federal law requires.
- Eliminates references to home health aides from the law limiting the supervision of PASSPORT program home health aides and personal care aides to registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) under the direction of RNs.
- Specifies that LPNs may supervise PASSPORT program personal care aides under the direction of the following additional practitioners: chiropractors, dentists, optometrists, physicians, physician assistants, and podiatrists.

Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)

- Requires the Department to seek approval to allow the Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) applicants to receive PACE services immediately upon applying, during a presumptive eligibility period, while a full eligibility determination is conducted.
- Specifies that, if the applicant is later determined to be ineligible for PACE, the PACE organization that made the presumptive eligibility determination is responsible for the costs of PACE services provided to the individual during that period.

BELTSS license fees

- Increases fees paid to the Board of Executives of Long-Term Services and Supports (BELTSS) for nursing home administrator license applications, initial licenses, renewals, and reinstatements and for health service executive license renewals.
- Establishes the fee for a temporary license, available beginning January 1, 2025.
- Changes the term “administrator in training” to “administrator resident.”

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Pesticide Law

- To comply with updated U.S. EPA regulations regarding pesticides, makes changes to the law governing restricted use pesticides, pesticide business licensure, pesticide registration, pesticide applicator examinations, and pesticide dealers, including doing the following:
  - Requiring restricted use pesticides to be applied exclusively by a licensed commercial or private pesticide applicator, rather than allowing a commercial applicator's trained service person or a private applicator's immediate family or employee to apply those pesticides under the direct supervision of the licensed applicator;
  - Requiring each pesticide business location to be licensed, rather than requiring one license for the pesticide business and the registration of each location that is owned by the person operating the pesticide business; and
  - Increasing the number of days that the ODA Director may suspend a license, permit, or registration prior to a hearing concerning a violation from ten to 30 days.
- Increases fees relating to the annual registration of a pesticide sold or distributed in Ohio.
- Requires an applicant for a pesticide applicator license to pay a $30 examination fee.

Hemp cultivation and processing

- Grants authority to the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) Director to transfer jurisdiction to implement the hemp cultivation licensure program in Ohio to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but retains the requirement that ODA implement a hemp processing licensure program.

Auctioneer client trust accounts

- Allows a licensed auctioneer to deposit money into a client trust account, and retain that money in the account, to pay expenses related to bank charges necessary to maintain the account.

Apiaries

- Makes changes to the requirements governing apiaries (beekeeping), including registration, the sale or gift of queen bees, and deputy apiarists.
- Expands the ODA Director's enforcement authority regarding the Apiary Law to include compliance agreements between ODA and a person engaged in queen rearing where the person agrees to comply with stipulated requirements.
- Eliminates a board of county commissioners' authority to appropriate money in an amount it deems sufficient for the inspection of apiaries in its county.

Pork Marketing Program

- Establishes a Pork Marketing Program to promote the sale and use of pork products, but states that the program cannot operate unless the National Pork Checkoff Program created under federal law ceases operation.
- Applies to the program the same procedures and requirements that apply to the Grain and Soybean Marketing Programs, except establishes specific procedures for electing the Pork Marketing Program Operating Committee.
- Establishes an assessment of the lesser of the following to fund the program:
  - 0.25% of the market value of the porcine animal, pork, or pork product sold or imported; or
  - An amount established by the operating committee at the committee's initial meeting through an initial order.
- Allows the operating committee to increase the rate of assessment after the initial order by up to 0.1% per year, but specifies that assessments cannot be collected if assessments are levied under the National Pork Checkoff Program.
- As with other agricultural commodities, prohibits a person from knowingly failing or refusing to withhold or remit an assessment levied on pork or products.
- Excludes pork from the law governing other agricultural commodities.

Food processing establishment exemption

- Exempts a small egg producer that annually maintains 500 or fewer birds from food processing establishment regulations established by the ODA Director in rules.

Commercial Feed Law

- Revises the requirements governing commercial feed registration for manufacturers and distributors, including doing the following:
  - Clarifying that the registration must be made on an annual, rather than semiannual, basis;
  - Requiring a manufacturer or distributor to pay a $50 registration fee and file the registration annually by February 1; and
  - Removing the minimum $25 commercial feed inspection fee, which is generally calculated at a rate of 25¢ per ton and, instead, exempting the first 200 tons of commercial feed sold in a calendar year from the fee.

Fertilizer license fee

- Increases the annual license fee to manufacture or distribute fertilizer from $5 to $50 and increases the late license renewal fee from $10 to $25.

Commercial seed labeler permit

- Increases the annual commercial seed labeler permit fee from $10 to $50 and changes the annual expiration date of the permit from December 31 to January 31.
- Regarding the annual seed fee paid by a commercial seed labeler permit holder that is based on the amount of seed sold by the permit holder, eliminates the minimum fee of $5 and, instead, waives the fee if the permit holder owes less than $50 for the seed fee.

Bakery registration fee

- Reduces the annual registration fee for larger capacity bakeries and increases the annual bakery registration fee for smaller capacity bakeries.

Soda water, soft drink syrup manufacturers

- Eliminates the registration requirement for soda water syrup or extract manufacturers or soft drink syrup manufacturers that are not otherwise licensed as soft drink bottlers.

Cold storage locker license fee

- Increases the annual license fee for cold storage lockers from $50 to $200.

Nurseryperson inspection fee

- Increases the base annual inspection fee for a nurseryperson that produces, sells, or distributes woody nursery stock in Ohio or ships that stock outside Ohio from $100 to $200.
- Increases the additional per-acre inspection fee for growing woody nursery stock as follows:
  - In intensive production areas from $11 per acre, or fraction of an acre, to $15 per acre, or fraction of an acre;
  - In nonintensive production areas from $7 per acre, or fraction of an acre, to $10 per acre, or fraction of an acre.

Annual liming material tonnage report

- Eliminates the annual tonnage report, and the accompanying inspection fee, that a liming material licensee must file with ODA for the number of net tons of liming material sold or distributed to nonlicensees in Ohio.

Certificate of free sale

- Allows the ODA Director to authorize any ODA division or program to issue to any entity a certificate of free sale, which is a document that certifies to states and countries receiving a listed product that the product is freely marketed without restriction in the U.S.
- Authorizes the ODA Director to charge a $50 fee for issuance of a certificate of free sale.

Grape Industries Committee

- Revises the makeup of the Ohio Grape Industries Committee by removing the Chief of the Division of Markets in ODA and adding two Ohio residents appointed by the ODA Director.

Commercial dog breeding and pet store funds

- Renames the High-Volume Breeder Kennel Control License Fund the Commercial Dog Breeding Fund.
- Abolishes the Pet Store License Fund and requires all pet store license fees and civil penalties assessed against pet stores to be credited to the Commercial Dog Breeding Fund.

Livestock dealers – fees and penalties

- Alters the fees charged by ODA to livestock dealers and brokers.
- Eliminates the first-degree misdemeanor criminal penalties for violating any prohibition of the law governing livestock dealers and brokers, except for a weigher improperly weighing or accepting bribes, and instead allows the ODA Director to assess a civil penalty.

Animal and Consumer Protection Fund

- Eliminates the Livestock Care Standards Fund and Dangerous and Restricted Animal Fund and redirects the money credited to those funds to the Animal and Consumer Protection Fund.
- Redirects money collected from livestock dealer and broker fees and fines imposed for violating the law governing livestock dealers from the Animal and Consumer Protection and Laboratory Fund to the Animal and Consumer Protection Fund.
- Requires the Animal and Consumer Protection Fund to be used to administer the laws governing dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes, livestock dealers, and captive cervid.

Food Safety Fund

- Requires money received from federal contracts or cooperative agreements for the performance of ODA's prescribed duties related to food safety inspections to be deposited into the Food Safety Fund, rather than into a general federal grant fund in which all federal grants to ODA are otherwise deposited.

AIR QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

- Eliminates any property or portion thereof that is part of, or related to the siting of, the inactive FutureGen project of the U.S. Department of Energy from the definition of "air quality facility" under the air quality development authority law.
- Adds any property, device, or equipment comprising a facility generating green energy, as defined in the competitive retail electric service law, to the definition of "air quality facility."

OHIO ARTS COUNCIL

- Would have eliminated the Per Cent for Arts Program (**VETOED**).

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Age verification – obscenity or matter harmful to juveniles

- Requires an organization that sells or presents any material or performance that is obscene or harmful to juveniles to verify that any person attempting to access, or creating an account or subscription to access, those materials is 18 or older through reasonable age verification methods.
- Requires an organization that uses age verification to delete identifying information of any person attempting to access or creating an account or subscription after age verification is completed.
- Exempts persons employed by newspapers, magazines, television stations, or similar media and certain service providers disseminating information for the general public from fulfilling the age verification requirement.
- Allows the Attorney General to bring a cause of action against an organization that fails to verify the age of the minor that accessed the materials that were harmful to juveniles on the internet.

Peace officer refresher training

- Prevents the expiration of peace officer certification due to a lapse in employment and specifies the training required upon reinstatement after a lapse.

Findings for recovery

- Specifies one additional consideration for resolved versus unresolved findings of recovery.

Notice for debts payable to the state (VETOED)

- Would have required the officer, employee, or agent responsible for administering the law under which an amount is due to the state to serve notice to the debtor or debtor's statutory agent before certifying the amount due to the Attorney General (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed the debtor or statutory agent to satisfy the debt within 30 days of receiving the notice to prevent the debt from being certified to the Attorney General (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the Attorney General to include a copy of the notice that was sent and proof of service of the notice if filing a lien (**VETOED**).
- Would have specified that failing to timely serve notice would not have deemed the amount payable uncollectible, discharged, relieved, or otherwise satisfied or nonpayable (**VETOED**).

Correctional facility inspections

- Creates the Office of Correctional Facility Inspection Services within the Attorney General's Office and transfers to it the duties of the Correctional Institution Inspection Commission, which the act abolishes.

State law enforcement and training reimbursement (VETOED)

- Would have prohibited a state agency from receiving statutory reimbursement for continuing professional training provided to a peace officer or trooper appointed by the state agency (**VETOED**).

AUDITOR OF STATE

- Requires the Auditor of State (AOS) to conduct a performance audit of PUCO by May 1, 2027.
- Requires AOS to conduct a performance audit and a financial audit of the Ohio Judicial Conference and provide the results to the Speaker of the House and the Senate President by December 31, 2026.
- Eliminates AOS's responsibility to pay for audit costs related to audits of medical assistance programs or individual medical assistance recipients.
- Allows the AOS to access a state agency or state institution of higher education's systems during an audit.
- Removes AOS from a variety of processes.
- Specifies that certain fiscal officers need only keep records of completed initial or continuing education courses.
- Changes AOS's duty to audit certain safeguards implemented by state institutions of higher education.

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Renaming

- Changes the names of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and the Director of Mental Health and Addiction Services to the Director of Behavioral Health.

Summary suspension of residential facility licenses

- Allows DBH to suspend the license of a Class 1 residential facility serving children without a prior hearing for specified reasons primarily related to actual harm or the risk of harm to a child under the care and supervision of the facility.

Grounds for discipline

- Consolidates the reasons for which DBH may impose disciplinary actions against facilities and service providers by allowing the actions to be taken on the same grounds at any time, either when an initial license or certification is sought or after it has been received.

Notice of adverse actions by other regulators

- Extends the duty to report adverse actions to DBH by also requiring reports to be made of adverse actions taken against a subsidiary of an applicant or specified associates.
- Specifies that "adverse action," in the context of which regulatory actions must be reported to DBH, does not include disciplinary actions taken by DBH itself.
- Permits DBH to impose sanctions based on adverse actions not only when it receives a required notice, but also when it otherwise becomes aware of an adverse action, as long as the action was taken in the preceding three-year period.

Subsidiaries of opioid treatment programs

- Requires a subsidiary of an opioid treatment program provider or a subsidiary of the provider's owner or sponsor to have been in good standing to operate an opioid treatment program in all other locations during the three-year period preceding application for licensure.

Certified community behavioral health clinics

- Permits DBH to establish a process and standards for the state certification of federally certified community behavioral health clinics (CCBHCs) if there is sufficient state and federal funding available.
- Requires DBH to determine, in the absence of sufficient funding to certify CCBHCs, how an integrated care approach for the provision of substance use disorder (SUD) and mental health treatment could be implemented through pilot projects or other initiatives.

Statewide mobile crisis system

- Requires DBH to coordinate with other government entities to assist with the development and implementation of a statewide system of mobile crisis services, if there is sufficient state and federal funding available.
- Requires DBH to determine, in the absence of sufficient funding for a statewide system of mobile crisis services, how pilot programs or other initiatives for mobile crisis services could be implemented.

Behavioral health block grants

- Permits DBH to use GRF for block grants that provide flexibility for ADAMHS boards to provide harm reduction, prevention, SUD treatment, mental health treatment, recovery supports, and crisis services.
- Requires the DBH Director to establish block grant distribution methodologies, allowable uses of block grants, and a uniform reporting structure regarding the expenditures, uses, and outcomes of the block grants.

Community innovations

- Requires the DBH Director to identify programs, projects, or systems where targeted financial investments may decrease demand for DBH services and improve outcomes for Ohioans with mental illnesses or addictions.

Recovery housing – investigative materials

- Establishes confidentiality requirements regarding complaints and information received or generated by DBH in the investigation of complaints involving recovery housing residences.
- Allows for disclosure of complaint information in identified circumstances.

Patient billing in state-operated psychiatric hospitals

- Permits DBH to calculate the amount it bills for care in a DBH-operated hospital according to the hospital's ancillary per diem rate, if DBH determines that the ancillary per diem rate applies instead of the hospital's per diem charge.
- Requires, if a patient has health benefits that cover less than the calculated charge, that the patient pay the lesser of: (1) the remaining balance or (2) the amount that applies after DBH takes into consideration the patient's eligibility for discounts and other payment reductions.

Behavioral Health Drug Reimbursement Program

- Changes the funding model used by the Behavioral Health Drug Reimbursement Program from one that is solely reimbursement to one of financial assistance.

VOIP service immunity

- Exempts, except for willful or wanton misconduct, voice over internet protocol (VOIP) service providers from liability in a civil action for damages resulting from their acts or omissions in connection with the 9-8-8 Hotline.

DBH Trust Fund

- Eliminates authorization to transfer unexpended, unencumbered balances of DBH's GRF appropriations to the DBH Trust Fund.

High-THC cannabis study

- Requires DBH to collaborate with the Department of Commerce and a public university, public safety agency, or research consortium to assess cannabis regulation and the health risks and benefits of cannabis use.
- Requires DBH to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by June 30, 2026, and June 30, 2027, and to publish the report on its website.

Ibogaine study committee

- Establishes the Ibogaine Treatment Study Committee to evaluate the use of ibogaine for treating individuals with substance use disorders and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and mild traumatic brain injuries.
- Requires the committee to submit a report with recommendations for legislation addressing the use of ibogaine to the General Assembly by December 31, 2027, after which the committee is dissolved.

Residential facilities directory

- Requires DBH to publish on its website a directory of all residential facilities it licenses.

OFFICE OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT

State appropriation limitations (VETOED)

- Would have modified, starting July 1, 2027, how the state appropriation limitations (SAL) are calculated by requiring the inclusion of certain non-GRF appropriations in the SAL calculation (**VETOED**).
- Would have eliminated the SAL alternative growth factor related to population growth and inflation (**VETOED**).
- Would have eliminated the General Assembly's authority to exceed the SAL in response to an emergency proclamation by the Governor (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the Governor to itemize all non-GRF appropriation line items that are subject to the SAL as part of the Governor's biennial budget submissions (**VETOED**).

Impact of federal grant suspension

- States that if the federal government reduces or suspends any federal program that provides funding for a corresponding state program, that state program may be reduced or suspended.

OBM support services

- Requires OBM to perform routine support services for the New African Immigrants Commission.
- Authorizes OBM to perform routine support services for any board or commission upon request.

Targeted Addiction Assistance Fund

- Creates the Targeted Addiction Assistance Fund to receive all funding awarded to the state to address the effects of the opioid crisis.
- Specifies that, beginning January 15, 2027, any money received under the settlement agreement in *State of Ohio v. McKesson Corp.* must be certified by the Attorney General and sent to OBM for deposit in the fund.
- Requires the OBM Director to notify the Speaker of the House, Senate President, and the chairpersons of the House and Senate Finance Committees when money is deposited into the fund.

Fund interest to GRF (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Redirects the interest earned by various funds to the GRF (**PARTIALLY VETOED**).

State Land Royalty Fund

- Revises the requirements and procedures regarding the transfer of money derived from oil and gas leases on state land from the State Land Royalty Fund (SLRF) to individual funds administered by state agencies.
- Creates three funds for such transfers for DNR, the Division of Wildlife in DNR, and ODOT, but retains the current law authority for any other state agency to designate a fund for oil and gas lease deposits.

Centralized reporting of state grants (VETOED)

- Would have required the OBM Director to establish and administer a centralized reporting system for state grant recipient financial status reports (**VETOED**).

Computer data center tax exemption

- Removes the OBM Director as one of the officials who receives copies of an application for a complete or partial tax exemption from a taxpayer that proposes a capital improvement project for a computer data center.

BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

- Would have made political subdivision personnel rendering intrastate mutual assistance or aid under an agreement with another subdivision or the Ohio Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact employees of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency for purposes of workers' compensation coverage (**VETOED**).

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY PROFESSIONALS BOARD

Terminology change

- Replaces the term "chemical dependency" with "substance use disorder."

Applications

- Requires applicants for licensure, certification, or endorsement from the Chemical Dependency Professionals Board to submit applications in the manner the Board prescribes.

Discipline

- Permits the Board to discipline an individual credentialed by the Board for an inability to practice due to mental illness or physical illness.
- Permits the Board to discipline an individual credentialed by the Board for conviction in another jurisdiction of either a felony or misdemeanors committed in the course of practice.

Internships, practicums

- Permits the Board to require internships or practicums as a condition of licensure, certification, or endorsement, instead of preceptorships as specified by current law.

Alternative licensure pathways

- Eliminates pathways to licensure that require the professional to hold formerly accepted credentials on December 23, 2002.
- Eliminates a pathway to licensure as a chemical dependency counselor II that requires a professional to have held a certificate as a chemical dependency counselor assistant since 2008 and meet other requirements.
- Eliminates a pathway for licensure as an independent chemical dependency counselor-clinical supervisor for applicants who held a license on March 22, 2013, under which an applicant is not required to pay a fee or comply with other licensure requirements.

Codes of ethics

- Requires the codes of ethics adopted by the Board to prohibit engaging in multiple relationships with clients.
- Expands specific requirements for the development of codes of ethics to apply to all professionals credentialed by the Board.

Board membership

- Eliminates requirements that (1) not more than half of the Board be of the same gender and (2) at least two voting members be of African, Native American, Hispanic, or Asian descent.

Counselor I license

- Eliminates obsolete references to the chemical dependency counselor I license, for which initial licensure was eliminated in 2002 and renewals ceased in 2008.

Eliminated requirements

- Eliminates a requirement that each license or certificate include the Board's address and telephone number.
- Eliminates a requirement that a holder of a license, certificate, or endorsement issued by the Board prominently post that license, certificate, or endorsement at the holder's place of employment.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

I. Child Care

Publicly funded child care (PFCC)

Eligibility

- Maintains the maximum amount of family income for initial PFCC eligibility at 145% of the federal poverty line, and for special needs child care, at 150%, until June 30, 2027.
- Repeals provisions that allow an applicant to receive PFCC while a county department of job and family services (CDJFS) determines the applicant's eligibility.
- Expands to 12 months (from a maximum of 90 days) the period for which a family is eligible for homeless child care.

Provider payment

- Requires payment to PFCC providers to be made prospectively, by changing references from "reimbursement" to "payment" in the PFCC laws.
- Requires the Department of Children and Youth (DCY) to establish for the period beginning not later than December 31, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027, certain PFCC payment categories and time increments for the number of hours per week that a child is authorized to receive publicly funded child care.
- Increases PFCC provider payments from the rate the provider customarily charges for providing child care to the payment rate established by DCY in rules for PFCC providers that customarily charge below the payment rate.
- For the period beginning not later than December 31, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027, prohibits DCY from aligning type A family care home payment rates with those for child care centers and instead requires type A rates to align with those for type B family child care homes.
- Requires DCY, when aligning family child care home payment rates for that period, to pay at the rates established in accordance with law.
- Beginning not later than July 5, 2026, requires DCY to calculate publicly funded child care payments based on a child's enrollment with a child care provider, rather than on the child's attendance as under current law.
- Authorizes DCY to contract with a third-party entity to analyze child care prices in even-numbered years.

Provider licensure

- Increases from six to seven the number of children that may receive care in a type B family child care home and increases to 8 to 14 (from 7 to 12) the number of children that may receive care in a type A family child care home.

- Requires a second adult to be present in a type A family child care home if at least four children under age two or more than seven children total are receiving care at one time.
- Removes the requirement that an in-home aide be recertified every two years.

Child Care Choice Vouchers

- Requires DCY to establish the Child Care Choice Voucher Program to provide vouchers to eligible families to assist them with child care costs.

Early Childhood Education Grants

- Codifies the Early Childhood Education Grant Program, with the aim of supporting and investing in Ohio's early learning and development programs.
- Establishes eligibility conditions for participation, including that an early learning and development program (1) satisfy quality standards specified by the DCY Director, and (2) provide early learning and development services to one or more preschool-aged children with family incomes not exceeding 200% of the federal poverty line.
- Generally requires funds appropriated to the program to be distributed to grant recipients, and prohibits more than 2% to be used for program support and technical assistance.
- Requires the DCY Director to adopt rules to administer the program, including rules addressing (1) eligibility conditions and other requirements, (2) standards, procedures, and requirements for applying for and distributing grants, and (3) methods by which DCY may recover erroneous payments.

Child Care Cred

- Creates the Child Care Cred Program that allows for child care costs to be shared by participating employees, employers, and DCY.
- Requires each participating employee to choose a child care provider for the employee's child, but specifies that the chosen provider must hold a license issued by DCY or be certified by a county department of job and family services.
- Appropriates $10 million for the program

Provider Recruitment and Mentorship Grants

- Establishes the Child Care Recruitment and Mentorship Grant Program to help increase the number of licensed child care providers in Ohio.

Preschool reporting

- Requires DCY alone, instead of with the Department of Education and Workforce, to provide consultation and technical assistance and in-service training to, and annually inspect and report on, preschool and school child programs operated by specified entities.

Professional registry

- Requires the DCY Director to contract with a third party to develop a registry information system to provide training and professional development opportunities to early learning and development program employees.

II. Child Welfare

Summary suspension of institution or association's certificate

- Allows DCY to suspend the certificate of an institution or association (defined generally under pre-existing law as an entity or individual, such as a foster caregiver, receiving or caring for children for two or more consecutive weeks) without a prior hearing for specified reasons primarily related to the actual or risk of harm to a child under the care and supervision of the institution or association.

Group homes

- Requires the DCY Director to adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to establish requirements regarding the following for group homes for children:
  - The use of the Ohio Professional Registry for completing background checks and criminal records checks for individuals overseeing or working within a group home;
  - Training on behavioral intervention;
  - Supervision of children, including staff-to-children ratios.
- Prohibits a group home operator from displacing a child to meet the ratio requirements.
- Allows the DCY Director to revoke or suspend the certificate of a group home that violates these requirements.

Regional wellness campuses

- Requires DCY to assist with the establishment of regional child wellness campuses to serve children and youth who are, or are at risk of being, in the custody of a public children services agency (PCSA) but not yet placed in a licensed residential setting.

Prevention services

- Changes the beneficiary of prevention services from the child to the family in law regarding referrals by a PCSA and the disclosure to a prevention services provider of confidential information discovered during an investigation.
- Specifies that if a family is determined to benefit from prevention services, the PCSA *may* make a referral to a provider, *if available* (instead of requiring referral).

Mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect

- Adds an employee of an entity providing home visiting services under the Help Me Grow program as a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect.

Request for proposals – rate cards

- Allows DCY to issue a request for proposals to establish statewide rate cards for placement and care of children eligible for foster care maintenance payments, except for foster homes and kinship caregivers.
- Requires, if a request for proposals is issued, DCY to review and accept the reasonable costs to cover specified requirements for each child eligible for foster care maintenance payments.
- Permits DCY to establish (1) a form for agencies or entities that provide placement services to children to report costs reimbursable under Title IV-E and Medicaid and (2) procedures to monitor the cost reports.

Benefits to children under the custody of a Title IV-E agency

- Requires a Title IV-E agency that receives care and placement of a child to determine if the child is eligible for or receives certain benefits, including payments from the Social Security Administration and survivor benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the state retirement systems.
- Prohibits a Title IV-E agency from using those benefits to pay for or reimburse the agency, county, or state for any cost of the child's care.

Foster care adoption waiting period

- Removes the six-month waiting period from the requirement that a foster child reside in a foster caregiver's home for at least six months before a foster caregiver (1) may submit an application to adopt the child and (2) is exempt from adoption home study requirements.

Adoption grants

- Requires that grants be made to eligible applicants only to the extent state funds are available for this purpose.
- Requires the adoptive parent to be an Ohio resident at the time the adoption was finalized to be eligible for a grant.
- Specifies that a person who produces or submits false or misleading documentation or information to DCY for the purpose of receiving a grant is guilty of the crime of falsification, a first degree misdemeanor.
- Maintains confidentiality of records that are confidential under federal or state law when they are provided to DCY as part of a grant application.

Diagnostic ultrasound machine grants

- Requires the DCY Director to purchase 3D diagnostic ultrasound machines and provide them through a grant program to certain Ohio entities that do not (1) charge for

ultrasound services provided to pregnant women or (2) promote abortion, perform abortion-related medical procedures, or make referrals for abortions.

Responsible Fatherhood Initiative

- Requires DCY, through the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood, to contract with a nonprofit organization for the development and implementation of the Responsible Fatherhood Initiative and award grants to nonprofit organizations to provide support to fathers and materials and community engagement on fatherhood.
- Requires the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood to include in its annual report a performance evaluation of the grant recipients.
- Designates the month of June as "Responsible Fatherhood Month."

Multi-system youth

- Requires JFS, DCY, DBH, DYS, ODM, and the Department of Developmental Disabilities to collaborate to identify and take appropriate action to meet the needs of multi-system youth more effectively and jointly submit a report to the General Assembly on serving those youth.

Kinship Support Program state hearing rights

- Removes the option for a state hearing after a denial or termination of Kinship Support Program payments.

Ohio Children's Trust Fund

Regional prevention councils

- Eliminates law dividing the state into eight child abuse and child neglect prevention regions and listing the counties encompassing each region, and instead requires the Ohio Children's Trust Fund (OCTF) Board, in consultation with DCY, to determine the number of regions and the counties within each region.
- Reduces the term of each member of a child abuse and child neglect regional prevention council appointed by the OCTF Board from three years to two years.
- Allows a council member selected as chairperson of a council to be reappointed to a second term by the original appointing authority.
- Clarifies that the reappointment of a chairperson by a board of county commissioners is not considered an appointment under the law that allows county commissioners to appoint up to two members to a council.
- Permits (instead of requires) the OCTF Board to select a regional prevention coordinator to oversee each child abuse and child neglect regional prevention council.
- Requires OCTF staff to serve as regional prevention coordinator for any region without a coordinator that has been selected by the Board.

Children's advocacy centers

- Allows an entity seeking to establish a children's advocacy center to request a one-time payment of up to $5,000 from the OCTF Board to be used towards start-up costs.

III. Councils

County family and children first councils

- Removes the prohibition that an individual whose family receives or has received services from an agency represented on a county family and children first council cannot serve on the county council if the individual is employed by an agency represented on the council, but requires the individual to complete a conflict of interest disclosure form and abstain from votes that involve the individual's employer.
- Permits the number of county council members representing families to equal 20% of a council's membership.
- Authorizes district level administrative designees to serve on a county council instead of the superintendent of the school district with the largest number of pupils in the county and another superintendent representing other districts.
- Permits, rather than requires, the administrative agent of a county council to send notice to specified persons when a member has been absent from a specified number of meetings.
- Permits a board of county commissioners to decline to establish or maintain a county council in specified circumstances.
- Permits a board that has decided not to establish or maintain a county council to reconsider that decision at any time but requires it to be reconsidered within five years.

Advisory councils consolidation

- Requires the Governor to create and appoint members to the Children and Youth Advisory Council, replacing the Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Ohio Home Visiting Consortium, and the Early Intervention Services Advisory Council.
- States that the Council's purpose is to advise the Governor regarding prenatal and child-serving systems and to serve as the state advisory council on early childhood education and care and the state interagency coordinating council required by federal law.
- Requires the Council to create topic-specific advisory groups addressing at least the following: early childhood education and care, children services, maternal and infant vitality, early childhood mental health services and supports, and early intervention services.

IV. DCY duties

Autism services contracts

- Requires DCY – when applicable – to contract with an entity to administer programs and coordinate services for infants, preschool and school-age children, and adults with autism and low incidence disabilities.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Director of Education and Workforce give primary consideration to the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence as the contracting entity when the Department of Education and Workforce contracts with an entity to administer and coordinate such programs and services.

Biennial summit on home visiting

- Repeals law requiring DCY to facilitate, and allocate funds for, a biennial summit on home visiting.

DCY transfers, recodification

- Makes conforming changes and technical corrections to reflect the transfer of various duties and responsibilities to DCY in H.B. 33 of the 135th General Assembly.
- Relocates and recodifies numerous Revised Code sections that relate to DCY's duties and responsibilities to the DCY chapter of the Revised Code (Chapter 5180).
- Transfers or adds responsibility regarding certain programs to DCY.

OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

- Revises the timeframe in which the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) must authorize the Attorney General to file a housing discrimination lawsuit to not more than 30 days after receiving notice from a party to an OCRC housing discrimination complaint that the party is electing to pursue the claim in court instead of through the administrative process.
- Allows a complainant or an aggrieved person named in an OCRC housing discrimination complaint to file a lawsuit not less than 30 days, but not more than 60 days, after a party to the complaint elects to proceed in court, if OCRC fails to authorize a housing discrimination lawsuit, or the Attorney General fails to file it.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Division of Financial Institutions

- Removes the statutory requirement that 5% of all charges, penalties, and forfeitures paid to the Superintendent of Financial Institutions by check-cashing lenders, small loan licensees, mortgage brokers, loan officers, and certain other entities be transferred to the Financial Literacy Education Fund (FLEF).
- Requires the OBM Director to transfer $150,000 from the Consumer Finance Fund (CFF) to the FLEF in each of FYs 2026 and 2027.
- Removes the requirement that at least half of FLEF programs be offered at public community colleges and state institutions.
- Removes the requirement that FLEF programs be directed to adults.

State Fire Marshal

Online consumer fireworks sales

- Permits licensed fireworks manufacturers and wholesalers to conduct online sales of 1.4G fireworks ("consumer fireworks"), subject to certain procedural requirements.
- Requires online sales to be linked to a specific manufacturer or wholesaler that will deliver the consumer fireworks in the manufacturer's or wholesaler's retail showroom or via curbside delivery in a designated pick-up zone.
- Allows a manufacturer or wholesaler to construct a tent or other temporary structure in the designated pick-up zone, provided the structure is approved by the State Fire Marshal (SFM) and compliant with the State Building Code, the State Fire Code, and local zoning requirements.
- Requires manufacturers and wholesalers that conduct online sales of consumer fireworks to implement reasonable traffic control measures for curbside deliveries.
- Prohibits a manufacturer or wholesaler from delivering consumer fireworks by mail order or other process outside the licensed premises, displaying fireworks for sale outside the retail showroom, or permitting members of the public to access areas of the licensed premises other than the retail showroom and the designated pick-up zone.
- Allows a manufacturer or wholesaler to submit alternative delivery systems for consumer grade fireworks to the SFM for approval.
- Permits the SFM to adopt rules as necessary to implement and enforce the provisions.

Fire suppression systems in agricultural structures

- Excludes covered patios from the calculation of the fire area of an agricultural structure for the purposes of determining the necessity of a fire suppression system.

- Requires a building or zoning official to provide written notification to an affected party that the Fire Code still applies to a building or structure that is exempt from the rules of the Board of Building Standards.

Division of Real Estate and Professional Licensing

Real estate salesperson and broker applications

- Requires an applicant for a license as a real estate salesperson or broker to include the address of the applicant's current residence on the application.
- Requires an applicant for a real estate broker license that is not an individual, to include on the application the address of the current residence of each of the applicant's members or officers.
- Exempts the addresses from the Public Records Law.

Written agency agreements

- Stipulates when a real estate broker or salesperson must enter into an agency agreement with a seller, purchaser, or tenant.
- Replaces the term "marketing" with "advertising" in law concerning agency agreements.
- Defines "nonexclusive agency agreement" for the purposes of real estate transactions.

Burial permit fee

- Increases the burial permit fee from $3 to $10.
- Requires $6 of each burial permit fee to be allocated to the Cemetery Grant Program.
- Increases the maximum grant amount from $2,500 to $5,000.
- Codifies a rule that allows operators of five or more cemeteries to apply a grant annually and all other operators to apply every other year.

Division of Securities

- Removes the annual $2.5 million cap on cash transfers from the Division of Securities Fund (DSF) to the Ohio Investor Recovery Fund.
- Specifies that a bank holding company or a savings and loan holding company is exempt from obtaining a dealer license when the holding company or its subsidiary is the issuer of the securities and meets other exemption requirements under law.

Division of Industrial Compliance

- Removes the requirement that a specialty contractor license application be verified by the applicant's oath (notarized).
- Eliminates the requirements that a licensed elevator mechanic seeking a temporary continuing education waiver due to temporary disability sign the waiver application under

penalty of perjury, and that a physician's statements regarding the temporary disability be certified.

Board of Building Standards

Residential Building Code enforcement

- Separates the state's Residential Building Code into two distinct categories of enforcement: (1) the erection and construction of new buildings, and (2) the repair and alteration of existing buildings.
- Authorizes local building departments that are certified to enforce the Residential Building Code for new buildings to also seek certification to enforce the Residential Building Code for existing buildings.
- Clarifies that local building departments and personnel are required to obtain certification from BBS for each category of the Residential Building Code they elect to enforce.
- Maintains that the 1% fee paid by certain local building departments to the Board of Building Standards (BBS) in connection with residential buildings applies to enforcement of both categories of the Residential Building Code.

Third-party examiners and building inspections

- Allows BBS to adopt rules that allow local building departments to accept plans examination and inspection reports from third-party building plan examiners and building inspectors.
- Permits BBS to establish competency standards for third-party building plan examiners and building inspectors.
- Specifies that the fees charged by a third-party examiner or inspector are the responsibility of the building owner and are in addition to current fees collected by local building departments on behalf of BBS.
- Clarifies that plan approvals and certificates of occupancy or completion remain the exclusive authority of the certified personnel employed by or under contract with a certified local building department and cannot be issued by a third-party examiner or inspector.

Division of Cannabis Control

- Requires the Division of Cannabis Control (DCC) to contract with a statewide nonprofit corporation to develop and implement cannabis and related drug misuse prevention, education, and public awareness initiatives.
- Requires at least 10% of the total funding for the initiatives to be provided by the nonprofit corporation through private contributions.
- Requires DCC to oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of the initiatives undertaken by the nonprofit corporation and to annually compile a report detailing certain metrics regarding the initiatives to submit to the General Assembly.

- Appropriates $10 million to the partnership.

Division of Liquor Control

Spirituous liquor sales

- Clarifies that the Division has authority to sell spirituous liquor from A-3a liquor permit premises (micro-distilleries) because, under continuing law, those permit holders sell spirituous liquor that the permit holder manufactures under contract with the Division.

D-5j liquor permit criteria

- Revises one of the conditions under which the D-5j liquor permit may be issued in a community entertainment district by eliminating the stipulation that the municipal corporation in which the permitted premises will be located in the district was incorporated as a village prior to 1880.

Liquor permit fee changes

- Stipulates that the fee for the D-7 liquor permit (restaurants and bars located in a resort area), which is issued for six months, is $2,814, rather than $469 per month; thus the fee is the same over the six-month period.
- Changes the $60 per day F-4 liquor permit fee (for wine festivals one to three days long) to a flat $180 fee.
- Changes the $60 per day F-11 liquor permit fee (for craft beer festivals one to three days long) to a flat $180 fee.
- Transfers deposits of H liquor permit fees derived from permit holders whose permit premises are located outside Ohio from the Undivided Liquor Permit Fund to the State Liquor Regulatory Fund.
- Increases from $100 to $250 the fee for the renewal of an S-2 liquor permit (large winery), thus making the amount of the renewal fee equal to the $250 fee for an initial S-2 liquor permit.

Financial products involving motor vehicles

- Exempts "excess wear and use waivers," i.e., contracts that nullify fees that might otherwise be owed at the end of a motor vehicle lease agreement for driving too many miles or damaging the vehicle, from state insurance laws.
- Prohibits conditioning terms of a motor vehicle lease on the consumer's payment for an excess wear and use waiver.
- Expands the insurance law exemption for motor vehicle "debt cancellation or debt suspension products" to include products that provide a financial benefit for the purchase of a new vehicle.

- Limits the requirement that debt cancellation or debt suspension products be listed as a specific good when invoiced to the consumer to "optional" products that are not a condition of the sale.
- Exempts optional debt cancellation or debt suspension products from state law limitations on interest and finance charges.
- Expands the types of agreements that qualify as "ancillary product protection contracts" and, thus, are exempted from state insurance laws to include certain contracts that protect against lease-end charges, vehicle value protection agreements, and contracts involving under-speed vehicles.
- Requires providers of "vehicle value protection agreements," i.e., agreements that provide a benefit to the purchaser when a vehicle is lost, stolen, damaged, obsolete, or diminished in value, to allow a 30-day period for the contract holder to cancel the agreement so long as no benefits have been paid.
- Establishes procedures and requirements for contract providers that seek to cancel a vehicle value protection agreement.

Mechanic's liens

- Changes the default expiration date of a notice of commencement from six years to four years and requires the notice to state that four years is the default term.
- Allows the person who contracted for the improvement, upon its completion, to request that the county recorder indicate that the notice of commencement is expired.
- Requires the person to serve notice, by regular mail, of the request on the original contractor, subcontractor, and lower tier project participant that served a notice of furnishing.
- Specifies that the expiration of a notice of commencement does not affect the attachment, continuance, or priority of any lien.
- Specifies that an owner's failure to serve an affidavit on a contractor of an improvement does not affect the owner's rights or obligations under law.

CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

- Exempts a wireless service provider or reseller, to the extent either of them are providing wireless service, from the assessment used to fund the Office of the Consumers' Counsel.

CONTROLLING BOARD

- Would have modified the limit on the Controlling Board's authority to approve unanticipated or additional expenditures (**VETOED**).
- Starting January 1, 2026, changes the deadline for the Controlling Board President to publish the Board's meeting agenda from seven days to ten days before each meeting.
- Subjects to Controlling Board approval any online subscription purchased by a state agency that in the aggregate exceeds $500 during the fiscal year.

OHIO DEAF AND BLIND EDUCATION SERVICES

- Permits a student enrolled in the State School for the Deaf or State School for the Blind to qualify for a high school diploma by completing a high school curriculum in lieu of completing the student's individualized education program (IEP).
- Requires investment earnings on money in each state school's educational program expense fund to be credited to that fund.

STATE BOARD OF DEPOSIT

Public depositories

- Specifies that a financial institution must have a banking office in Ohio to serve as a public depository.

Financial transaction devices

Definitions

- Redefines "financial transaction device" (FTD) and specifies that the term applies to devices for making payments or transfers of funds denominated in U.S. dollars.
- Defines "processor" as an entity conducting the settlement of an electronic payment or transfer of funds denominated in U.S. dollars.
- Expands "state entity" to include an officer under the authority of a state elected official, and to include entities that deposit funds into an account in the custody of the Treasurer of State (TOS).
- Defines "administrative agent of the board of deposit" to mean the TOS.
- Changes the defined term "state expenses" to "revenue" and expands it to include charges, tolls, court-ordered restitution, judgments, and other amounts owed to the state.

Resolution

- Requires, instead of permits, the State Board of Deposit (BDP) to adopt a resolution authorizing the collection, receipt, and acceptance by the state of revenue, gifts, donations, or bequests made by a FTD.
- Specifies that BDP's resolution applies to FTD services related to bank accounts comprising the state treasury and those in the custody of TOS that are not part of the state treasury.
- Eliminates BDP's duty to send a copy of the resolution to each state elected official and state entity authorized to accept payments for state expenses by FTD.
- Eliminates law authorizing a state entity under the authority of a state elected official to decline to accept payments by FTD.
- Eliminates the requirement that each state elected official or state entity provide written notice to BDP's administrative agent of the official's or entity's intent to implement BDP's resolution.

Administrative agent

- Removes the requirement that BDP's administrative agent request proposals from at least three financial institutions, issuers of FTDs, or processors of FTDs.
- Requires BDP's administrative agent to request proposals for acceptance, processing, and settlement services pursuant to BDP's resolution.

- Requires BDP's administrative agent to publish electronic public notices regarding requests for proposals on the agent's website instead of a state agency website.
- Increases from ten to 15 days the minimum amount of time, after the initial publication of an administrative agent's request for proposals, after which the request for proposals will be available.
- Requires that the administrative agent's request for proposals detail the services subject to the request.
- Eliminates the requirement that the administrative agent send via email the request for proposals to financial institutions, issuers, or processors interested in receiving the request.
- Eliminates the requirement that the administrative agent's notice require that a financial institution, issuer, or processor submit written notice of its interest in the request for proposals.
- Eliminates BDP's duty to review all submitted proposals.
- Permits BDP to authorize an administrative agent to contract, on BDP's behalf, with processors submitting proposals, and permits the agent to enter into one or more contracts for payment, collection, acceptance, processing, receipt, and settlement services for state entities and state elected officials.
- Requires BDP's administrative agent to provide notice to a processor when the processor's proposal is rejected.
- Gives TOS authority to contract as necessary to fulfill its obligations as BDP's administrative agent.

Surcharges and convenience fees

- Allows state elected officials and state entities to establish a surcharge or convenience fee on a person making payment by FTD.
- Eliminates the prohibition on surcharge or convenience fees that are not authorized by contract.
- Eliminates the requirement that every state entity accepting payment by FTD post a notice in the entity's office when a surcharge or convenience fee is imposed.
- Eliminates the requirement that a notice of a surcharge or convenience fee contain a clear statement that the surcharge or convenience fee is nonrefundable.
- Eliminates law stating that surcharge or convenience fees are nonrefundable.
- Changes the types of deficient payment a person is liable for under the provision and specifies that the person is liable to a state elected official or state entity.

Limitation of liability

- Excludes state entities from personal liability immunity and extends personal liability immunity to state elected officials and employees of a state entity or state elected official.

Warrant clearance accounts

- Adds paper checks to the definition of a warrant clearance account.

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

Residential economic development district grants

- Creates a grant program for counties, townships, and municipal corporations located within 20 miles of a major economic development project.
- Allows a county, township, or municipal corporation to apply for a grant independently, or in collaboration with a housing developer, port authority, council of government, regional planning commission, or other subdivision.
- Specifies the purposes for which grant funds must be used.
- Requires applicants to adopt pro-housing policies and approve a major workforce housing project consisting of at least 100 units.
- Requires the Director of Development (DEV Director) to evaluate and score applications based on metrics outlined by the act, including by giving preference to applicants that adopt more pro-housing policies in terms of both number and impact.
- Requires the Director to adopt rules to implement the program and to finalize and publish initial application procedures and scoring metrics by December 31, 2025.

Residential development loans

- Creates the Residential Development Revolving Loan Program.
- Specifies that loans made by the program are only available to local governments that are located in a county with a population of 75,000 or less and that issued fewer new construction permits for single-family homes than the average number of permits issued in counties in Ohio.
- Specifies that borrowed funds are only for projects involving the development, repair, or upgrade of water, sewer, road, electric, or gas infrastructure necessary to service dwellings meeting statutory requirements.
- Limits the loan amount to the lesser of 50% of the cost of the infrastructure developments, repairs, or upgrades or $30,000 per single-family residential dwelling to be served by that infrastructure.
- Requires political subdivisions receiving loans to waive certain building, zoning, and planning requirements for the residential development project served by the project.
- Prohibits the Department of Development (DEV) from using more than $500,000 annually of the money deposited to the Residential Development Revolving Loan Fund for administrative expenses.
- Requires political subdivisions receiving loans to exempt improvements constructed from loan proceeds from property taxes, collect payments in lieu of taxes, and use those payments to pay off the loan.

- Appropriates $90 million for the program in FY 2026, and allows for any unused funds to be carried over into FY 2027.

Building demolition and site revitalization grants

- No longer requires DEV to award building demolition and site revitalization grants to projects on a first-come, first-served basis.

Brownfield Remediation Program

- Alters the parameters for the types of projects that are eligible for funding under the Brownfield Remediation Program and the procedures for issuing grants.

State private activity bonds

- Grants DEV authority to allocate Ohio's volume ceiling on state private activity bonds established under federal income tax law.
- Requires DEV to adopt rules governing the administration of the volume ceiling, including an allocation formula.
- Establishes a custodial fund consisting of fees paid by issuers receiving volume ceiling allocations to pay DEV's costs in administering Ohio's volume ceiling.

DEV funds

- Eliminates the Mortgage Insurance Fund and the corresponding authority of the DEV Director to insure mortgage payments on behalf of a person, partnership, corporation, or community improvement corporation using money from the fund.
- Eliminates the Mortgage Guarantee Fund.
- Eliminates the DEV Director's Purchase Fund.
- Eliminates sinking fund requirements for certain funds received by the DEV Director.

Individual Microcredential Assistance Program

- Creates the Institutional Platinum Provider Program (IPPP) under which a state institution of higher education participating in the Individual Microcredential Assistance Program (IMAP) may receive one or more advance payments for training costs for individuals to earn a microcredential.
- Increases from $500,000 to $1 million the total advance payment or reimbursement amount a state institution participating in IMAP and IPPP may receive in a fiscal year.
- Creates the Platinum Provider Program under which an eligible IMAP participant may receive one or more advance payments for training costs for individuals to earn a microcredential.

Affirmative action programs in public contracting

- Eliminates a requirement for all contractors from whom the state or a political subdivision makes purchases to have a written affirmative action program for the employment and utilization of economically disadvantaged persons.
- Eliminates a prohibition against DEV disbursing capital money appropriated for any project unless the project provides for an affirmative action program for the employment and utilization of persons who are disadvantaged due to their culture, race, ethnicity, or other similar reasons.
- Repeals a requirement that a person receive a certificate of compliance with affirmative action programs before bidding on a public improvement construction contract or a transportation construction contract awarded by the Director of Transportation.
- Prohibits most public authorities, for subcontracts of construction managers at risk and design-build firms, from eliminating a bidder as unqualified on the basis that the bidder has not complied with an affirmative action program, or a diversity, equity, and inclusion program.

Welcome Home Ohio Program

- Decreases the minimum square footage for homes that receive Welcome Home Ohio (WHO) grants or tax credits from 1,000 to 800 square feet.
- Allows WHO funds to be used to acquire or rehabilitate manufactured homes but not mobile homes.
- Allows WHO funds to be used to acquire or rehabilitate residential units in a mixed-use development but requires the funds to be used for the residential units, common areas used by the occupants of the residential units, or improvements that serve the residential units.
- Increases the amount of the WHO tax credit from one-third of the construction and rehabilitation costs to 90% of such costs.
- Extends the WHO tax credit through the end of FY 2027 and allows up to $20 million in tax credits to be awarded in the biennium.
- Allows DEV to award WHO grants to certain qualified nonprofit developers that are incorporated in Ohio for the purpose of improving the physical, economic, or social environment by addressing critical problems like housing.
- Increases, from $30,000 to $100,000, the maximum amount of a WHO grant to rehabilitate or construct a home.
- Applies the same $100,000 cap to WHO grants for the acquisition of a home, which were not limited under prior law.
- Increases the income eligibility threshold for buyers of WHO-funded homes from 80% to 120% of the median income of the county where the home is located.

- Increases the amount for which WHO-funded homes may be sold from $180,000 to $220,000.
- Reduces from five years to three years the time the buyer of a WHO-funded home must agree to occupy the home as a primary residence and not rent it to anyone else.
- Reduces from 20 years to 15 years the time the buyer of a WHO-funded home must agree to not sell the home to anyone whose income exceeds the WHO eligibility thresholds.
- Specifies that the deed restriction concerning subsequent sales of a WHO-funded home is a covenant running with the land and is enforceable against subsequent buyers.
- Allows a grant or tax credit recipient to include in the deed restriction a right of first refusal to repurchase the property in order to ensure that subsequent buyers meet the income eligibility requirements.
- Allows up to $2,000 of each WHO grant to be used to fund the financial literacy counseling that grant recipients are required by law to provide to purchasers of the property.
- Reduces the minimum duration of the counseling from one year to six months.
- Requires the counseling to include basic home maintenance and financial literacy components, and to be conducted by a person who is licensed, certified, or authorized to provide the counseling services.
- Requires a grant recipient to reinvest any profits derived from the sale of a WHO-funded home in the land bank's land reutilization program or the developer's housing program.

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Supported living

Guardianship and supported living

- Prohibits the guardian of an individual with developmental disabilities, or a supported living certificate holder owned or operated by the guardian, from providing supported living to that individual unless related by blood, adoption, or marriage.

Notarized statement of residency

- Regarding the requirement that an applicant for employment with the Department or a county board or an applicant for a supported living certificate provide with proof of residency, eliminates the requirement that the applicant's statement be notarized.

Termination of supported living certificate

- Requires, rather than permits, the Director of Developmental Disabilities to terminate a supported living certificate if the certificate holder does not bill the Department for supported living services for 24 consecutive months.
- Requires the Department to terminate a supported living certificate by sending a notice to the certificate holder by certified mail explaining the termination.

Health-related activities

Developmental disabilities personnel – medication administration and other health-related activities

- Specifically authorizes developmental disabilities personnel to administer prescribed epinephrine intranasally to treat anaphylaxis, without nursing delegation and without a medication administration certificate.
- Requires developmental disabilities personnel to successfully complete training as a condition of administering topical over-the-counter medications as permitted under continuing law.
- Authorizes developmental disabilities personnel, with nursing delegation, to administer to recipients of early intervention, preschool, and school-age services prescribed medications for the treatment of metabolic glycemic disorders through subcutaneous injections.
- Replaces statutory references to vagal nerve stimulators with references to vagus nerve stimulators.

Family member authority to administer medications and perform health-related activities

- Authorizes certain family members of an individual with a developmental disability to administer medications to, and perform health-related tasks for, the individual without holding a medication administration certificate and without nursing delegation.

In-home care workers and health care tasks

- Establishes an additional condition on the authority of a family member to authorize an unlicensed in-home care worker to perform health care tasks for an individual with a developmental disability – that the family member is not acting as a paid provider for the individual.
- Eliminates the requirements that the unlicensed in-home worker provide care through employment or another arrangement with the family member and is not otherwise employed to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- Requires an unlicensed in-home worker to accept the written document in which the family member authorizes the worker to perform health-related tasks before the worker may perform them.
- Requires a county board of developmental disabilities to authorize appropriately credentialed providers to perform health care tasks for an individual with a developmental disability, rather than an in-home worker, when it determines that the individual's family member acted inappropriately.

Service and support administrator training

- Requires a superintendent of a county board of developmental disabilities to ensure that a service and support administrator and service and support administration supervisor successfully completes a web-based training program established by the Department within 30 days of being hired.
- Additionally requires a superintendent to ensure that an applicant seeking to renew such a certification has successfully completed the training program, before renewing the certification.

Intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICFs/IID)

- For FY 2026, reduces the professional workforce development payment component of an ICF/IID's per Medicaid day payment rate to 10.405% of the ICF/IID's desk-reviewed, actual, allowable, per Medicaid day direct care costs from the applicable cost report year.

County share of nonfederal Medicaid expenditures

- Requires the Director to establish a methodology to estimate in FY 2026 and FY 2027 the quarterly amount each county board of developmental disabilities is to pay of the nonfederal share of its Medicaid expenditures.

Withholding funds owed to the Department

- Permits the Director to withhold funds owed to a county board by the Department if the county board failed to pay any amount owed to the Department by a due date established by the Department.

Innovative pilot projects

- Permits the Director to authorize, in FY 2026 and FY 2027, innovative pilot projects that are likely to assist in promoting the objectives of state law governing the Department and county boards.

Medicaid rates for homemaker/personal care services

- For 12 months, requires the Medicaid rate for each 15 minutes of routine homemaker/personal care services provided to a qualifying enrollee in the Individual Options Medicaid waiver program be 52¢ higher than the rate for services to an enrollee who is not a qualifying enrollee.

Community developmental disabilities trust fund

- Abolishes the community developmental disabilities trust fund.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

State Board membership

- Reduces the membership of the State Board of Education from eight members appointed by the Governor and 11 elected members to a total of five members, all appointed by the Governor.

Funding

- Abolishes the State Board of Education Licensure Fund.
- Requires the operating expenses of the State Board to be primarily paid from, and the license, certificate, and permit fees it receives to be deposited in, the Occupational Licensing and Regulatory Fund.
- Requires the State Board to establish license, certificate, and permit fee amounts that are sufficient, along with any appropriation made by the General Assembly, to cover all operating expenses, rather than just the cost of administering its licensure system as under former law.

Teacher Residency Program

- Eliminates the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA) as a measure of appropriate progression through the Ohio Teacher Residency Program.
- Permits the use of teacher evaluations conducted in accordance with state law as a measure of appropriate progression under the program.

Alternative resident educator license

- Permanently permits an individual to receive an alternative resident educator license in any subject area without limitation by the State Board of Education.

School district territory transfers

- Requires the State Board to generally approve a proposed transfer of territory from a school district that has received an overall performance rating of less than two stars on its state report card for two or more consecutive school years.

Professional Licensing System

- Requires the State Board to consult with the Department of Administrative Services about utilizing the Ohio Professional Licensing System.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE

I. School finance

Funding for FY 2026 and FY 2027

- Extends, with changes, the operation of the school financing system established in 2021 by H.B. 110 of the 134th General Assembly and the payment of temporary transitional aid and the formula transition supplement.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to pay both of the following supplements in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027 to city, local, and exempted village school districts:
  - An enrollment growth supplement to each district that experienced a specified percentage of growth in enrolled ADM between specified fiscal years; and
  - A per-pupil performance supplement to each district that received a specified performance rating on the most recently issued state report card.
- Requires the Department to pay a base funding supplement in each of FY 2026 and FY 2027 to each school district, STEM school, and community school.
- Requires the Department to adjust the economically disadvantaged average daily membership (ADM) used to calculate disadvantaged pupil impact aid (DPIA) for FY 2026 and FY 2027 for each school district, community school, and STEM school so that the ADM is weighted to be partially based on both:
  - The economically disadvantaged ADM reported in the district or school in FY 2025; and
  - The ADM of students certified as categorically eligible for a free meal under federal law in the fiscal year for which DPIA is calculated.

DPIA plan partners

- Qualifies a community mental health prevention provider as one of the entities with which a school district, community school, or STEM school may develop its plan for using its DPIA.

Career-technical education associated services funds

- Modifies the purposes for which school districts may use career-technical education associated services funds.

Career awareness and exploration funds

- Permits the lead district of a career-technical planning district to use career awareness and exploration funds to provide mentorship opportunities for students to learn about careers and workforce skills.

- Requires the lead district of each career-technical planning district receiving career awareness and exploration funds to report on the use of those funds to the Department.

Quality Community and Independent STEM School Support Programs

- Codifies the Quality Community School Support Program and the Quality Independent STEM School Support Program.

Facilities funding for community and STEM schools

- Codifies the per-student facilities payment for community schools or STEM schools.

Community, STEM school special education threshold cost pool

- Establishes a separate threshold special education cost pool for community schools and STEM schools.
- Requires the Department to withhold an amount equal to 5% of each community school's and STEM school's special education funding for the pool, subject to any funding limitations enacted by the General Assembly.
- Requires the Department to redistribute any unused funds withheld for the new pool for FY 2026 and FY 2027 to community schools and STEM schools in the same proportion that the funds were originally contributed.

Auxiliary services funding

- Permits a chartered nonpublic school to use auxiliary services funds to provide diagnostic and therapeutic mental health services and to hire retired Ohio peace officers as security officers.

Payment for districts with decreases in utility TPP value

- Requires the Department to make a payment, for FYs 2026 and 2027, to each city, local, exempted village, or joint vocational school district that has at least one power plant within its territory and experiences a 10% or greater decrease in the taxable value of utility tangible personal property (TPP) and an overall negative change in TPP subject to taxation.

II. State scholarships

Autism and Jon Peterson Special Needs scholarships

- Increases the maximum amount of an Autism Scholarship and a JPSN Scholarship from $32,445 to $34,000.
- Increases the categorical amounts for a JPSN Scholarship.
- Qualifies for a scholarship a child who is enrolled in a chartered or nonchartered nonpublic school, is home educated, or is older than compulsory school age and younger than 22 and is still eligible to receive transition services under the child's IEP.

- Permits multiple alternative public or registered private providers to be contracted to provide services to implement an IEP or education plan.
- Specifies that intervention services, educational services, academic services, tutoring services, aide services, and other related special education services may be provided virtually.
- Prohibits a qualified special education child who participates in JROTC maintained by the child's resident school district from being considered enrolled in that district for determining eligibility for an Autism or JPSN scholarship
- Clearly states that a child is eligible under the Autism Scholarship if that child is at least age three and younger than 22.
- Expands the individuals who may apply for a scholarship on behalf of a special education child and perform certain other duties regarding the child's participation in the Autism Scholarship Program.
- Expands eligibility for the JPSN Scholarship to three- and four-year-olds.
- Requires the Department to maintain a list of Autism and JPSN scholarship registered private providers and their locations on its publicly accessible website.

Nonchartered Educational Savings Account Program (VETOED)

- Would have established the Nonchartered Educational Savings Account Program to provide eligible students with an educational savings account (ESA) beginning in the 2026-2027 school year (**VETOED**).

III. Career-technical education

Waivers for middle school career-technical education

- Requires all school districts to provide career-technical education to 7th and 8th graders on and after July 1, 2026, by eliminating waivers from that obligation.

Approval deadlines for career-technical programs

- Eliminates the application and approval deadlines for new career-technical education programs.

Career-Technical Assurance Guides

- Adds CTAG-aligned courses to the types of programs that may be considered an "advanced standing program" at school districts, other public schools, and chartered nonpublic schools.
- Requires each district and school that has students enrolled in CTAG-aligned career-technical courses to implement a policy for grading and calculating class standings for those courses in a manner that is equivalent to the district or school's policy for its other advanced standing programs.

Industry-recognized credentials

- Eliminates the requirement for the Director of Education and Workforce's industry-recognized credentials and licenses committee to establish a point value system for credentials to help determine whether a student qualifies for a high school diploma.
- Requires the Director's committee to instead establish criteria under which a student may use industry-recognized credentials to help qualify for a high school diploma.

IV. Assessments, instruction, and tutoring

Diagnostic assessments

- Requires the Department, by June 30, 2026, to adopt a diagnostic assessment for reading for each of grades K-3 and approve a list of up to five diagnostic assessments aligned with the state academic standards for each of grades K-3 for both reading and math.
- Requires the diagnostic assessment for reading to be designed to measure student comprehension of foundational reading skills aligned to the science of reading.
- Requires public schools to administer the diagnostic assessments to their students by September 30 of each year, beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.

Kindergarten readiness assessment

- Requires public schools to administer the kindergarten readiness assessment (KRA) to each kindergarten student between July 1 of the school year in which the student enrolls in kindergarten and the 20th day of instruction of that school year.
- Requires public schools to utilize and score the KRA in accordance with rules established by the Department of Children and Youth.
- Eliminates KRA data on the state report cards.

State assessments as public records

- Eliminates the requirement that 40% of state assessment questions be made a public record, and instead requires the Department to determine which questions, if any, are to be public record.

College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

- Adds the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) to the programs that may be considered an advanced standing program at public and chartered nonpublic schools.
- Adds passing scores on the CLEP exams as a demonstration of post-secondary readiness on the state report card and as a qualification for the college-ready, citizenship, science, and technology diploma seals.

Core curriculum and evidence-based reading programs

- Narrows the requirement for a public school to use core curriculum and instructional materials in English language arts from the Department's approved list by applying it only to curricula and materials for students in grades pre-K-5.
- Expressly requires a public school to use evidence-based reading intervention programs from the Department's approved list for students in grades pre-K-12.

Advanced math learning opportunities

- Requires school districts to provide advanced math learning opportunities to students who achieve an advanced level of skill on either a math achievement assessment or an end-of-course exam.
- Exempts school districts from providing advanced math learning opportunities if the district does not offer any of those opportunities in the grade level in which the student is enrolled for the next school year.
- Requires districts to notify the parent or guardian of a student who qualifies for advanced math learning opportunities and permits the parent or guardian to opt the student out of them.

Tutoring

- Permits a public school to incorporate high-dosage tutoring into a student's regular instruction time for each student on reading improvement and monitoring plans.
- Requires a locally approved high-dosage tutoring program to align with best practices identified by the Department.
- Requires the Department's request for qualifications for high-quality tutoring programs to include a request for program efficacy data or other evidence of program effectiveness for participating students.
- Requires the Department to remove from the high-quality tutoring program list any program that is not aligned to the Science of Reading or that uses a three-cueing approach.
- Requires the Department, at least every three years, to update and provide an opportunity for entities to submit their qualifications for consideration to be included on the list.

Financial literacy instruction exemptions

- Permits a public or chartered nonpublic school to adopt a policy to excuse from the financial literacy instruction graduation requirement each student who, during high school, participates in a financial literacy program offered through the student branch of a credit union or by a bank.

V. Educators

Use of seniority in teacher assignments

- Prohibits the use of seniority or continuing contract status as the primary factor when assigning teachers, and instead requires assignment on the basis of the best interests of students.
- Specifies that the provisions pertaining to teacher assignment prevail over conflicting provisions of collective bargaining agreements entered into on or after September 30, 2025.

Science of Reading professional development

- Requires the Department to maintain an introductory Science of Reading training course and develop a competency-based training course that updates and reinforces educators' knowledge in the Science of Reading.
- Requires each teacher, administrator, or speech-language pathologist employed by a public school to complete the Department's Science of Reading training by a specified date dependent upon when the individual was hired, and every five years thereafter.

In-service training

- Requires each public school to develop its own youth suicide awareness and prevention in-service educator training curriculum, instead of adopting or adapting curriculum developed by the Department.
- Eliminates the express authorization for a public school to have child sexual abuse in-service training for educators provided by law enforcement officers or prosecutors, and instead requires a school to develop its own curriculum in consultation with public or private agencies.

Computer science educator licensure

- Makes permanent an exception set to expire after the 2024-2025 school year that permits a licensed educator who completes specified professional development to teach computer science without otherwise being licensed in that subject area.

VI. Community schools

High-performing community school definition

- Revises the definition of "high-performing community school" in the law regarding the right of first refusal to purchase school district property and the involuntary disposition of school district property.

Dropout prevention and recovery community schools

- Narrows the application of law regarding community schools that specialize in students enrolled in dropout prevention and recovery programs to only apply to schools that meet certain requirements established in the act.

Sponsor evaluations

- Excludes all community schools whose contracts were not renewed or terminated by their sponsors before the sponsor's evaluation from the calculation of that evaluation's academic performance component.
- Eliminates the Department's authority to permit a peer review of a sponsor's adherence to quality practices component on its evaluation.
- Requires the Department to evaluate sponsors that receive an "exemplary" rating every five full school years and sponsors with a rating of "effective" every three full school years, rather than requiring both to be evaluated once every three years under prior law.
- Qualifies "exemplary" sponsors for specified incentives rather than requiring an "exemplary" rating for the two most recent school years.
- Prohibits the Department from including Alternative Education Academy in the academic component calculation of the sponsor evaluation for the Office of Ohio School Sponsorship for the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years, but includes the school in that component if the Office continues to sponsor it after 2026-2027.

Community school opening assurances

- Reduces from ten to five the number of days prior to opening for its first year of operation or first year of operation from a new building that a community school sponsor must provide prescribed assurances to the Department.
- Requires a community school sponsor that adds to an existing location, or an e-school that changes its location or adds a satellite location, to provide the prescribed assurances at least one day prior to operation in the new facility.

Multiple facilities

- Permits any community school to be located in multiple facilities in more than one school district under the same contract.

Contracts and comprehensive plans

- Eliminates the requirement that each community school submit a comprehensive plan to its sponsor and instead requires the plan's provisions be included in the contract between the school's sponsor and governing authority.

Classical schools and assessment administration

- Permits a classical school to generally administer state assessments in a paper format.

Community school FTE reporting

- Extends through the 2025-2026 school year the option of certain community schools to report their student enrollment on a full-time equivalent basis based partially on credits earned.

VII. School policies

Student absences

- Modifies the process school districts, brick-and-mortar community schools, and STEM schools must follow when addressing student absences.
- Removes whether a student has missed 10% or more of the school year as a condition for determining if that student is subject to grade level retention.
- Eliminates the timeline under which a school district attendance officer must file a complaint and instead bases the filing solely on whether a student is making satisfactory progress in improving attendance.
- Excuses a high school student enrolled in a school district to attend a driver education course.

Student cellphone use

- Requires each public school to generally prohibit the use of cellphones by students during instructional hours.

Artificial intelligence

- Requires the Department to adopt a model policy by December 31, 2025, on the use of artificial intelligence in schools.
- Requires public schools to adopt a policy by July 1, 2026, on the use of artificial intelligence.

Religious instruction released time

- Requires a school district to permit students to attend a released time course in religious instruction for at least one period a week.
- Limits student attendance in such a course to no more than two periods per week for elementary or middle school students and two units of high school credit per week for high school students.
- Requires school districts to permit students to bring external educational and program materials from a released time course into school.

Interdistrict open enrollment

- Exempts a student whose parent is an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces stationed in this state from any school district interdistrict open enrollment application deadline.
- Eliminates a district's authority to adopt a resolution that objects to its resident students open enrolling into another district if the student's home district is receiving Impact Aid under a repealed federal law and at least 10% of its students are included in that aid calculation.

VIII. Transportation

Community school transportation consortium

- Permits the governing authorities of two or more community schools to establish a consortium to provide or arrange transportation to and from school for students in participating schools.
- Requires a consortium to act on behalf of participating schools regarding student transportation and to comply with any law regarding student transportation in the same manner as a community school.
- Requires the Department to calculate and make payments to a consortium as if it were a community school using combined data submitted by the consortium's fiscal agent.

Student transportation via mass transit

- Requires a city, local, or exempted village school district in Montgomery County that uses a mass transit system to transport students to and from a community or chartered nonpublic school to ensure that the transfer between routes does not occur at the central hub for the system.

Multifunction school activity buses

- Authorizes school districts, chartered nonpublic schools, and community schools to use a multifunction school activity bus to transport students between school and other school-related functions or activities.
- Prohibits a multifunction school activity bus from being used for student transportation between school and home or a designated bus stop.
- Requires a driver of a multifunction school activity bus to meet all the same standards of a regular school bus driver.
- Authorizes the purchase of a multifunction school activity bus in the same manner as other school buses.

Transportation workgroup

- Requires the Director of Education and Workforce to establish a workgroup on student transportation to monitor and review the student transportation system during the 2025-2026 school year and develop recommendations for changes that better meet transportation needs.
- Requires the workgroup to conduct a study of and develop recommendations regarding the feasibility of a school district to transport students enrolled in a community school or nonpublic school on days that the community school or nonpublic school is open for operation with students in attendance, but the school district is not.
- Requires the workgroup to submit a report on its findings to the Governor and General Assembly by June 30, 2026, and disband following the report's submission.

Pupil Transportation Pilot

- Extends the operation of the Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Pilot Program to the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years.

Rural transportation grants

- Creates the Rural Transportation Grant Program and requires the Department to award transportation grants to rural dropout prevention and recovery community schools where more than 75% of its students are economically disadvantaged.

Bus purchasing grants

- Eliminates the bus purchasing grant program.

IX. Other

State report card – Early Literacy component

- Revises the performance measure regarding the percentage of students promoted to the fourth grade under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee so that it is based only on students who attain a promotion score on the third grade English Language Arts assessment or an alternative assessment.

Demand side educator employment data

- Requires the Department, beginning September 30, 2026, to annually collect public school employment and vacancy data and to aggregate and report that data on its public website.

Adult education

- Eliminates the Adult Diploma Program and 22+ Adult High School Diploma Program effective July 1, 2026, but permits an individual enrolled in either of them to complete that program by June 30, 2027.
- Permits an eligible provider to establish a competency-based educational program for eligible individuals to earn a high school diploma beginning July 1, 2026.
- Qualifies individuals who are at least 18 years old, have officially withdrawn from school, and have not received a high school diploma or certificate of high school equivalence to participate in a program.
- Requires the Department to award a high school diploma to enrolled individuals who demonstrate competency through specified activities or earn specified course credits.
- Requires the Department to pay each provider up to $7,500 per school year for each enrolled individual based on the extent of the individual's successful completion of the program's diploma requirements.

Aim Higher Pilot

- Establishes the Aim Higher Pilot Program to provide additional funding to JVSDs that operate a dropout prevention and recovery program in FY 2026.

Ohio Code-Scholar Program

- Replaces the five-year Ohio Code-Scholar Pilot Program with a permanent program that outlines permissible uses of the program's appropriation, requires an annual report, and designates Southern State Community College as the lead entity to expand the program.

Tuition for students in residential facilities

- Assigns responsibility for paying tuition for a child who is parentally placed in a residential treatment facility in consultation with and upon recommendation of the OhioRISE Program to the school district where the child's parent resides.
- Exempts a school district from the responsibility to pay tuition for a child who has been awarded a state scholarship.

Cap on school district administrative expenses

- Prohibits any school district from using more than 15% of its annual operating budget on administrative salaries and benefits and other costs associated with the district's administrative offices.

School district revenue and expenditure report

- Requires each school district to submit appropriations, revenue, and fund balance assumptions contained in the board's budget for a fiscal year, in addition to projections of expenditures, revenues, and fund balances for the three succeeding fiscal years, rather than for five years, as under prior law.
- Requires the Department and the Auditor of State to label projections regarding property tax allocation as state reimbursement for property tax credits.
- Requires the Auditor of State or the Department to examine the current budget information and projections to determine whether a district has the potential to incur a deficit during the first two years of the three-year period, rather than the first three years of the five-year period as under prior law.

Contracts for school district construction

- Extends the school district contract bidding process for planned construction projects that exceed the competitive bidding threshold amount from work on any "school building" to work on any "building or other property."

Participation in athletics at a different school

- Eliminates the eligibility of students enrolled in a public or nonpublic school who are victims of certain qualifying offenses to participate in interscholastic athletics at a different school.
- Permits a school district superintendent to allow a student enrolled in another school district the opportunity to participate in ice hockey as an interscholastic athletic activity at a school operated by the superintendent's district under certain circumstances.

Online learning schools

- Permits school districts to employ teachers and nonteaching employees, or to contract with a nonprofit or for-profit entity, to operate an online learning school.

Public entities and preschool children with disabilities

- Requires certain public entities that serve preschool children with disabilities to adhere to the Step Up to Quality Program and exempts certain school districts from that requirement.

Aspire Program

- Transfers the Aspire Program's administration from the Department of Higher Education (ODHE) to the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) by July 1, 2026.
- Includes the standard transfer language and addresses the transfer of ODHE employees whose primary duties include administering the program and staff resources used to administer it to DEW.
- Authorizes the OBM Director to make budget and accounting changes to implement the program's transfer.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Environmental fees

- Extends and revises various fees charged by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) under the laws governing water pollution control, safe drinking water, and scrap tires.
- Extends solid waste transfer and disposal fees an additional two years, until June 30, 2026.
- Increases, by 50%, fees related to OEPA's air pollution control program, including fees for facility permits to install and annual fees that are based on total air pollution emissions or emission capacity.
- Creates an annual $5,000 flat fee charged to synthetic minor facilities and Title V air pollution control permit holders in addition to the emission-based annual fees.
- Eliminates the $140 infectious waste generator registration application and renewal fee.
- Eliminates the application fee of 0.5% of the total exempt facility project costs, not to exceed $2,000, for an industrial water pollution control facility that files for a certificate to exempt the facility from certain taxes.
- Eliminates a $500 application fee for an industrial water pollution control certificate that applied to industrial water pollution control facilities under law in effect until June 26, 2003.

Waste facility permit notification

- Allows the OEPA Director to give notification of the public hearing regarding a solid waste facility permit application or infectious waste treatment facility permit application either via newspaper publication or publication on the OEPA website, instead of only in a newspaper as in prior law.

E-Check

Extension

- Extends the motor vehicle inspection and maintenance program (E-Check) in the counties where the program is implemented by authorizing the OEPA Director to request the DAS Director to extend the existing contract with the contractor that conducts the program beginning July 1, 2025, for a period of up to 24 months until June 30, 2027.
- Requires a decentralized E-Check contract to achieve "an equivalent amount of emissions reductions" as the centralized program authorized by the contract specified above, rather than "at least the same emissions reductions" as the centralized contract as in prior law.
- Requires the OEPA Director, if USEPA determines that the E-check program is not necessary for Ohio or any area of Ohio to comply with the federal Clean Air Act, to immediately discontinue the program and take any actions necessary to effectuate its termination.

Review and report

- Requires the OEPA Director to conduct a review to assess whether the current E-check program is necessary and to evaluate the impact of weather patterns over northeast Ohio on emissions and air quality.
- Requires the OEPA Director, by March 30, 2027, to submit to the General Assembly a report compiling the findings of the review, and make it available to the public on OEPA's website.

Air nuisance rule

- Requires the OEPA Director to remove any air nuisance rule from the federally required national ambient air quality standards state implementation plan and to take steps as are necessary to do so.
- Prohibits the Director, on and after September 30, 2025, from including an air nuisance rule in the state implementation plan or relying on an air nuisance rule to implement or enforce ambient air quality standards adopted pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act.

Community air monitoring

- Establishes requirements governing community air monitoring
- Generally prohibits the OEPA Director from either:
  - Imposing conditions in a permit that require community air monitoring, unless otherwise agreed to by the owner or air operator and the Director; or
  - Requiring an applicant for a permit for an air contaminant source to conduct community air monitoring prior to the issuance or renewal of a permit or a variance.
- Prohibits data produced from community air monitoring from being used as evidence to support either:
  - A fine, penalty, or notice of violation against any person for violations of or noncompliance with any federal or state air pollution regulation; or
  - An administrative, regulatory, or judicial enforcement action, lawsuit, or proceeding for violations of or noncompliance with any federal or state air pollution regulation.
- Generally prohibits data produced from community air monitoring from being considered or relied upon by OEPA or a local air pollution control authority in any rulemaking action, or in any action relating to the issuance of an installation permit or operating permit.

FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION

School facilities

- Requires the calculation of a school district's share for a Classroom Facilities Assistance Program project to be based solely on the required percentage based on the district's equity ranking.
- Requires a district that segments its classroom facilities needs to calculate the required percentage based on equity ranking on the date the Controlling Board approves the first segment for both that segment and future segments.
- Permits the Facilities Construction Commission (FCC) to set aside a portion of its school facilities funds each biennium to assist at least two joint vocational school districts.

Public improvements contracts

Electronic notices, advertisements, and filings

- Requires several types of notices or advertisements to be sent via electronic media.
- Requires FCC to make copies of the plans, details, estimates of cost, and specifications available electronically.
- Removes the requirement that a public authority file a notice of commencement of a public improvement in affidavit form.
- Permits a bidder for most contracts with the state or a political subdivision to file a bid guaranty by electronic verification through an electronic verification and security system, if the state or political subdivision accepts bids electronically.

Declaration of exigency

- Requires that, when the FCC Executive Director issues a declaration of public exigency at the request of a state agency, the director of the state agency, at the determination of the FCC Executive Director, must enter into a contract with the proper persons to address the exigency.

Building information modeling systems

- For public works contracts of $200,000 or more, permits a public authority to require an architect or engineer, in preparing plans, details, specifications, estimates, analyses, or other data, to use a building information model system, if the system is based on a nationally recognized standard for building information models.
- Defines "building information model" as a digital representation of physical and functional characteristics of a facility, and electronic files used to design and coordinate the project, whether it is a single model or multiple models used in the aggregate.

Public improvements contracts retainage and escrow

- For partial payments on a public improvements contract, decreases the public authority's required retainage amount from 8% of the contractor's estimate to 4% or less, but repeals a requirement that the public authority retain 0% after the job is 50% completed.
- Prohibits contractors from paying subcontractors at a retainage rate lower than the rate being paid to the contractor by the public authority.
- Repeals law requiring the public authority to deposit the retained amount in an escrow account.
- Clarifies that retained funds and the interest accrued on them is property of the contractor, and must be paid to the contractor within 30 days after the substantial completion of the work, withholding only funds reasonably necessary to ensure final completion of the work.
- Requires the remaining funds, and interest, to be released to the contractor within 30 days of final completion of the work.

Expedited processes for design-build firms and managers at risk

- For contracts between public authorities and construction managers at risk or design-build firms, creates an expedited proposal and selection process for projects under $4 million.
- Permits construction managers at risk or design-build firms, for contracts under $4 million, to submit both an initial qualification proposal or statement along with a pricing proposal, instead of sending them in separate rounds.
- Requires the public authority to have a pre-proposal meeting with any such contractors who desire to jointly submit a statement or proposal and pricing proposal.
- Exempts these contractors from the requirement to submit a sealed bid to self-perform a portion of work before accepting opening any bids for the same work when the public authority requests a guaranteed maximum price proposal due at the time of selection.

GOVERNOR

- Would have prohibited the Governor from proposing a budget that carries into the new fiscal biennium a GRF cash balance that exceeds the required ending fund balance (**VETOED**).
- Authorizes the Governor and former Governors of Ohio to solemnize marriages.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Nurse aide eligibility

- Establishes an alternative condition that an individual may satisfy to be eligible for employment as a nurse aide in a long-term care facility – that the individual has successfully completed both a training course provided in a nursing home operated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and a competency evaluation program conducted by the Department of Health (ODH).

Residential care facility license – operation during application

- Specifies that a residential facility or independent living facility that applies for a license to operate as a residential care (assisted living) facility may continue to operate as a residential facility or independent living facility while its application is pending.
- Restricts a residential facility or independent living facility from providing care to more than two residents while the application is pending.

Facility fees – hospital-owned primary care practices

- Beginning January 1, 2028, prohibits, with certain exceptions, a hospital-owned primary care medical practice from requiring a self-pay individual or third-party payor to pay a facility fee in connection with any primary care service provided at the practice.

Radiation-generating equipment inspection fees

- Increases inspection fees for certain radiation-generating equipment used in certain medical facilities.

School-based health center funds

- Requires the funds earmarked to support school-based health centers to be used by ODH, in consultation with the Department of Education and Workforce, in high-need counties.
- Requires, prior to establishing a patient-provider relationship with a minor, a school-based health center to obtain general consent from the child's parent, guardian, or other person authorized to consent to the child's medical care.

Youth homelessness funds (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Prohibits the distribution of funds earmarked to address homelessness in youth and pregnant women to youth shelters that promote social gender transition.
- Would have additionally prohibited the distribution of these funds to youth shelters that affirm social gender transition (**VETOED**).

Abortion

Reporting

- Changes the annual deadline for ODH's report regarding abortions during the previous calendar year from September 30 to March 1.
- Clarifies that the physician abortion reporting requirement under state law (1) applies to abortions performed by both surgical procedure and abortion-inducing drugs, and (2) must include each pregnant woman's state of residence in addition to zip code.
- Requires hospital monthly and annual abortion reports under state law to include the total number of Ohio residents versus non-Ohio residents who have undergone a post-12-week abortion and received postabortion care.
- Changes the deadline for ODH's annual report on abortion data from the previous year to March 1 and clarifies that the report must include the number performed on Ohio residents and the number performed on nonresidents.
- Requires ODH to develop a public electronic dashboard and publish monthly abortion data that includes specified information.
- Requires the annual report and monthly dashboard to be updated to include the total number of abortions performed on minors by each facility in the categories of under age 16 and ages 16 and 17.
- Requires that the annual report and monthly dashboard update and sort by age the total number of previous abortions the woman has undergone and the total number of in-state versus out-of-state women who had abortions.

Genetic Services funds

- Eliminates the exception authorizing ODH Genetics Services funds to be used to counsel or refer for abortion in the case of a medical emergency.

Deposit of vital statistics fees

- Transfers from the Treasurer of State to ODH the duty to deposit vital statistics fees into the state treasury to the credit of the Children's Trust Fund.

Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

- Extends the age limit for the Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs from 25 to 26.

OhioSEE Program

- Requires ODH to establish the Ohio Student Eye Exam Program, or OhioSEE, to provide students in grades K to 3 with vision care services, including vision screenings, eye examinations, and glasses.

Type 1 diabetes materials

- Requires ODH to create informational materials on type 1 diabetes for parents, guardians, educators, and other persons having care or charge of children.
- Requires schools that serve elementary school students to provide an electronic or paper copy of those materials to each student's parent or guardian.

Medical certificates of death

- Revises the law governing medical certificates of death, including by (1) extending the timeline by which a certificate must be completed and signed and (2) authorizing in some circumstances the physician who last examined or treated a decedent to certify the decedent's cause of death.

340B covered entity reporting (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Imposes reporting requirements on covered entities participating in the federal 340B Drug Pricing Program.
- Would have required offsite facilities associated with the covered entities to also comply with the reporting requirements (**VETOED**).

Lead abatement tax credit

- Increases from $10,000 to $40,000 the maximum lead abatement tax credit certificate that may be issued by the ODH Director.
- Reduces from $5 million to $3 million the total amount of lead abatement tax credit certificates the Director may issue in any fiscal year.

Household sewage treatment systems (PARTIALLY VETOED)

Evaluating compliance (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Would have required the ODH Director to adopt rules that establish statistical methods for evaluating sewage treatment system (STS) compliance for a 12-inch soil depth credit relative to bacterial parameters that are derived from a minimum of 144 consecutive data points (**VETOED**).
- Would have prohibited the ODH Director from implementing or enforcing any special device approval or similar policy that imposes additional requirements or restrictions on an STS or component of an STS that combines the treatment of effluent with subsurface dispersal of treated effluent directly to the soil (**PARTIALLY VETOED**).
- As a result of the Governor's partial veto, specifically authorizes the ODH Director to implement or enforce any special device approval or similar policy imposing additional requirements or restrictions on an STS or component of an STS that combines the treatment of effluent with subsurface dispersal of treated effluent directly to the soil.

Soil and slope inspection (VETOED)

- Would have prohibited the ODH Director from adopting rules requiring a soil evaluator or soil scientist to evaluate the soil type and slope with respect to a household sewage treatment system or a proposed household sewage treatment system (**VETOED**).

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In-state undergraduate tuition and fees

- Limits increases for in-state undergraduate tuition and general fee increases for FYs 2026 and 2027, as follows:
  - For each state university and university branch campus, tuition and fee increases for student cohorts entering each of those years may not increase more than 3% of what was charged to the student cohort entering in the previous academic year;
  - For each community, state community, and technical college, tuition and fees may not increase more than $10 per credit hour over what they charged in the previous academic year.

Ohio College Opportunity Grants

- Establishes maximum Ohio College Opportunity Grant amounts for FYs 2026 and 2027, as follows:
  - For students at state institutions of higher education, $4,000;
  - For students at private nonprofit colleges and universities, $5,000;
  - For students at private for-profit colleges and schools, $2,000.

Governor's Merit Scholarship

- Extends, with changes, the operation of the Governor's Merit Scholarship Program to FYs 2026 and 2027, including expanding eligibility to students enrolled in nonchartered nonpublic schools who meet the other criteria to receive a scholarship.

Ohio Work Ready Grants

- To qualify for a first-time Ohio Work Ready grant on or after September 30, 2025, requires a student to be enrolled in a program that meets alternative criteria established by the Chancellor of Higher Education based on Ohio's emerging workforce needs.

Rural Practice Incentive

- Revises the Rural Practice Incentive Program's operation by expanding eligibility for the program, modifying the factors used to determine underserved communities, and requiring a participating attorney to sign a promissory note payable to the state for failing to satisfy service obligations.

Contingent SSI funding (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Earmarks $75 million in FY 2027 from the State Share of Instruction (SSI) funds reserved for the university traditional SSI formula to be distributed based on each state university's percent share of traditional SSI formula funding.

- Prohibits the Chancellor from distributing the FY 2027 set-aside funds to a state university unless the university has fully complied in the prior fiscal year with requirements enacted by S.B. 1 of the 136th General Assembly.
- Requires each state university to submit, by March 1, 2026, a report demonstrating compliance with the S.B. 1 requirements.
- Would have required the House and Senate higher education committees each to determine, by March 31, 2026, whether each state university is in full compliance and report that determination to the Office of Budget and Management (**VETOED**).
- Would have subjected the funds' release to Controlling Board approval (**VETOED**).

State institutions of higher education

Credential and work experience

- Requires each state institution to consider an applicant's work experience and credentials as part of its admissions process and grant credit for prior learning or experience or detail the opportunities and required documentation to gain that credit.

General education requirements

- Requires each state institution board of trustees to formally review, evaluate, and adjust its general education criteria in specified subject areas.

American civic literacy course exemptions

- Requires each state institution board of trustees to adopt a resolution specifying the conditions under which the institution's president or the president's designee may grant an exemption from the American civic literacy course requirement to a student.
- Eliminates the exemption after the 2030-2031 academic year.

Guaranteed admission

- Guarantees each high school graduate in the top 10% of their graduating class admission to a state institution.
- Permits a state university to delay main campus admission and admit a high school graduate in the top 10% of the graduating class to a regional campus if the student does not meet the standards for unconditional admission.
- Guarantees admission to the main campus of a state institution of higher education for students who graduate in the top 5% of their graduating class, provided the student meets the application and acceptance deadlines for admission to the main campus.
- Requires the Chancellor, in consultation with the Director of Education and Workforce, to identify a process to provide each state institution with a list of all students who are eligible for guaranteed admission.

Co-Op Internship Program

- Requires state institutions to develop and implement a Co-Op Internship Program by the 2027-2028 academic year.
- Requires the Chancellor to consult with JobsOhio and other appropriate stakeholders to develop the goals, structure, and parameters of the program.
- Requires state institutions annually to report specified metrics.
- Eliminates the annual report on the academic and economic impact of the Co-Op/Internship Program.

Curricular approval process

- Requires each state institution board of trustees to adopt a curricular approval process to establish and modify academic programs, curricula, courses, general education requirements, and degree programs.
- Grants a state institution board ultimate authority to establish new academic programs, schools, colleges, institutes, departments, and centers at the institution.
- Prohibits a state institution board from delegating its authority to adopt a curricular approval process or to approve or reject academic programs.

Fiscal caution status

- Requires the Chancellor, in consultation with OBM, to adopt rules regarding:
  - Criteria for determining when to declare a state institution under fiscal caution;
  - Requirements for a state institution on fiscal caution to submit a financial recovery plan, submit a three-year forecast of revenues and expenditures, consult with the Auditor of State regarding steps to bring its financial accounting and reporting into compliance with the Auditor's requirements, and submit regular reports related to the fiscal caution; and
  - Criteria for determining when to terminate a fiscal caution.
- Permits the Chancellor to impose limitations on a state institution that fails to comply with requirements related to a fiscal caution or fails to take decisive action to improve the institution's financial condition.
- Expressly permits the Chancellor, OBM, or the Auditor of State to conduct any audit or analysis necessary to assess the fiscal condition of any state institution.

Use of financial indicators to evaluate institutions

- Requires the Chancellor to use specified financial indicators to determine whether a state institution board of trustees has taken any action related to pausing or stopping enrollment, submitted a withdrawal of accreditation, or taken any other action indicating the institution will undergo a wind-down and dissolution.

Governance authorities

- Requires a governance authority appointed for a state institution under conservatorship to include one member with expertise in academic affairs and accreditation and one member with expertise in either state agency budgets or state institution finances.
- If the governance authority determines closure is necessary or is appointed to facilitate an orderly closure, requires the governance authority to include in its quarterly report all matters related to compliance with institution closure requirements specified by the Chancellor.

Higher education program review

- Requires each state institution and private nonprofit college or university annually to submit specified information to the Chancellor, including accreditation status, a plan for the indefinite preservation of student records in case of closure, external degree program evaluations, and degree programs eliminated in the previous year.
- Requires each for-profit career college or school to submit the same information to the State Board of Career Colleges and Schools and the Chancellor.
- Permits the Chancellor to rescind program approval or institutional authorization if a college, university, or state institution does not submit the required information.
- Permits the State Board to suspend, withdraw, or revoke a career college's or school's certificate of registration or program authorization if it fails to submit the required information.
- Requires each college, university, state institution, and for-profit career college or school to notify the Chancellor, and, in the case of a for-profit career college or school, the State Board, if specified events occur related to federal government or accrediting organization monitoring, accreditation findings, and financial issues.

Eastern Gateway Community College

- Repeals the law establishing Eastern Gateway Community College, which ceased instruction in 2024, and requires the Chancellor to ensure continuity of postsecondary educational access in Eastern Gateway's former service district.
- Requires the Chancellor, or a third party authorized by the Chancellor, to serve indefinitely as the records custodian for Eastern Gateway.

Student record preservation plans

- Requires each state institution and each private nonprofit college or university annually to certify to the Chancellor, and each private for-profit career college or school annually to certify to the State Board of Career Colleges and Schools, a plan to preserve student records indefinitely if the institution were to close.

Centers for Civics, Culture, and Society

- Requires the directors of each Center for Civics, Culture, and Society to approve the center's courses that meet the state university's general education requirements, in addition to overseeing, developing, and approving the center's curriculum.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Civics Centers be physically located in a specific college at the university.
- Requires each university to provide adequate and appropriate space for its Civics Center.
- Establishes the Ohio Civics Board, consisting of the directors of the Civics Centers, to support the Civics Centers to more effectively pursue their missions of teaching and research.

Contracts with online program managers

- Establishes requirements for private nonprofit institutions of higher education, for-profit career colleges or schools, and state institutions of higher education that enter a contractual agreement with an online program manager to receive certain services to support an online degree program.

College credit for military experience

- Permits the Chancellor to require higher education institutions and schools to establish a process to evaluate military training, experience, and coursework and to award appropriate equivalent college credit to veterans.

Strategic Square Footage Reduction Fund

- Creates the Strategic Square Footage Reduction Fund to make revolving loans to state higher education institutions for voluntary physical square footage reduction.
- Requires the Treasurer of State to transfer funds from the Ohio Tuition Reserve Fund to the Strategic Square Footage Reserve Fund.

Direct Admissions Pilot

- Establishes the Direct Admissions Pilot Program to notify students in participating high schools if they meet the admissions criteria for participating postsecondary institutions.

Higher Education Public Policy Research Consortium (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Requires the Chancellor, in consultation with specified entities, to establish the Higher Education Public Policy Research Consortium to develop and maintain a biennial statewide research agenda.
- Establishes a process under which the Chancellor awards competitive research grants for faculty and post-graduate students whose research aligns with the biennial statewide research agenda.

- Would have limited research grant awards to a maximum of $10,000 (**VETOED**).

Accelerated College and Career Pathways

- Establishes the Accelerated College and Career Pathways Program under which each state university must establish at least one accelerated 90-hour degree program that is aligned to an in-demand career area by the 2027-2028 academic year.
- Requires each state university to develop, in consultation with local and regional primary and secondary education partners, model College Credit Plus (CCP) pathways that are aligned with the university's accelerated 90-hour degree programs and regional and state workforce needs.
- Requires each public and participating nonpublic secondary school to include those CCP pathways in its CCP information annually provided to students and parents.
- Prohibits the Chancellor from distributing SSI allocations to a state university in any fiscal year in which the university does not comply with the program requirements.
- Requires the Chancellor to establish criteria for approval of accelerated degree programs, provide technical assistance to universities for the program, identify how previously earned credit may apply to an accelerated degree program, and annually publish program data online.

AI Integration in Community Colleges Pilot Grants

- Establishes the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration in Community Colleges Pilot Program.
- Requires the Chancellor to award five $100,000 competitive grants in each fiscal year to community colleges, with preference to those with a strong commitment to integrating AI into education, workforce development, and industry alignment.
- Prescribes permissible uses of grant funds and requires the Chancellor to monitor performance and submit a report to the General Assembly.

Funding for Ohio Veterans Education Council members

- Requires the Chancellor to award scholarships in FY 2026 and FY 2027 to students who serve as Military Community Advocates.
- Requires the Chancellor to provide grants to military and veterans offices at institutions of higher education to support growth in private philanthropy, in collaboration with the National Veterans Leadership Foundation (NVLF), and sponsor staff from those offices to attend the NVLF's Advancement Institute.
- Requires the Chancellor to use appropriated funds to support NVLF administrative costs, create a website to connect veterans to programs and offerings at Ohio Veterans Education Council-member colleges and universities, administer membership and Ohio Purple Star status, facilitate information sharing, and support any other expenses as determined appropriate by the Chancellor, in consultation with NVLF.

Campus Community Grant Program

- Eliminates the Campus Community Grant Program.

FAFSA support system

- Eliminates the statewide system of regional FAFSA support teams.

"Teach CS" Grants

- Expands the scope of teachers to whom the "Teach CS" Grant Program applies.
- Clarifies the purposes for which grant funds may be used.

Reports and data reporting

- Reinstates the requirement that the Chancellor issue an annual report on College Credit Plus Program outcomes.
- Eliminates the annual report regarding the progress the state is making in increasing the percentage of adults in the state with a postsecondary degree or credential.
- Requires the Chancellor, in collaboration with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, to establish the level of attainment necessary to achieve identified performance targets across a range of degrees and credentials by December 31, 2025.
- Requires the Chancellor to submit reports regarding the Campus Security Support Program and the Campus Student Safety Grant Program to chairpersons of the House and Senate higher education committees by July 1, 2026.
- Permits the Chancellor to use data already submitted to the Higher Education Information System and other public data exchanges, if the information is materially consistent, to fulfill reporting requirements.

OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION

- Requires burial sites used by the Ohio History Connection (OHC) for repatriating American Indian remains to have an easement, enforceable by OHC, to preserve the burial sites.
- Exempts records related to the burial sites from disclosure under the Ohio Public Records Act, and excludes them from the 75-year disclosure requirement.

DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Licensing

- Eliminates the requirement that applications for a managing general agent (MGA) license or a public insurance adjuster certificate of authority be verified under oath.
- Aligns the deadline for completion of continuing education requirements for long-term care insurance agents with the agent's two-year license renewal period, as opposed to the two-year period beginning January 1.
- Makes selling, soliciting, or negotiating long-term care insurance before satisfying the continuing education requirement an unfair and deceptive practice in the business of insurance, in contrast to former law, under which failing to satisfy the continuing education requirement qualifies as such.

Pharmacy benefit managers (VETOED)

Reimbursement

- Would have prohibited a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM), other than the state PBM, from reimbursing an Ohio pharmacy less than either the amount the PBM reimburses its affiliated pharmacies for providing the same drug product or the pharmacy's actual acquisition cost for the drug dispensed (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed an Ohio pharmacy to decline to provide a drug product if the pharmacy would be reimbursed less than the required amount (**VETOED**).

Violations

- Would have permitted an Ohio pharmacy to file a formal complaint alleging a violation of the act's reimbursement requirements or other legal requirements concerning disclosure of maximum allowable cost pricing information (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the Superintendent, following notice and an opportunity for a hearing, to impose an administrative penalty on the PBM of $1,000 per day for each violation (**VETOED**).

Retaliation

- Would have prohibited a PBM from retaliating against an Ohio pharmacy that reported an alleged violation of, or exercised a remedy under, the act (**VETOED**).

Health care provider payment methods

- Requires a health plan issuer to offer all reasonably available methods of payment to a health care provider, including payment by check and electronic funds transfer.
- Prohibits a health plan issuer from charging a provider a fee for delivering payment through check or electronic funds transfer.

- Requires a health plan issuer to disclose fees charged by the health plan issuer or by an agent, affiliate, or third party contracted by the health plan issuer in connection with other methods of payment.
- Requires health plan issuers to allow providers to opt out of payment by credit card.
- Requires health plan issuers to implement requests to change a payment method within 31 business days.
- Prohibits health plan issuers from charging a fee for implementing a change to a health care provider's payment method.

Reimbursement for nurse anesthetists

- Prohibits a health benefit plan from varying the reimbursement rate for a covered service based on whether the service was provided by a certified registered nurse anesthetist or a physician.
- Specifies that the requirement does not prohibit a health benefit plan from establishing varying reimbursement rates based on quality or performance measures.

Ohio Assigned Risk Insurance Plan

- Requires insurance agents to take certain actions to confirm that a person seeking automobile insurance through the Ohio Assigned Risk Insurance Plan is unable to secure coverage through private insurers.

Uninsured drivers

- Expands the persons who may report a driver or owner of a motor vehicle involved in an accident to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles for failure to maintain financial responsibility to include any person who suffers injury or property damage, as opposed to only persons who are also drivers of a vehicle involved in the accident.

Private insurance outreach program

- Requires the Department of Insurance (ODI) to create and administer an outreach program to provide information, awareness, and assistance to Medicaid recipients to help them transition to private insurance.

Assisting end-stage renal disease patients

- Requires ODI to take certain actions regarding Medicare benefits for individuals with end-stage renal disease.
- Requires ODI to submit a report to the General Assembly by September 1, 2026, detailing its findings, including whether it is feasible to assist patients with end-stage renal disease in applying for Medicare.

DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

Public Assistance

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Able-bodied adults without dependents work requirements

- Prohibits the Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) from seeking, applying for, or renewing a waiver from the work requirements that apply to able-bodied adults without dependents receiving SNAP benefits.
- Prohibits JFS from implementing a federal option under which it may grant exemptions from the work requirements, unless implementing the option is necessary to prevent a federal penalty and to maintain compliance with federal rules.
- Prohibits JFS from delegating to a county department of job and family services (CDJFS) the authority to waive work requirements or grant exemptions.
- Requires JFS to notify the chairpersons of the House and Senate committees with relevant jurisdiction when implementing the federal option described above.

EBT card hotline

- Requires JFS to establish a process under its customer service hotline that allows SNAP participants to lock or unlock an EBT card that has been lost or stolen.

High balance accounts

- Requires JFS to periodically monitor the balances of SNAP accounts.
- Requires JFS to take steps to determine if a SNAP account with a balance of more than $5,000 is inactive and identify the causes for the accruing balance.

Exclusion of sugar-sweetened beverages (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Requires the JFS Director to seek a federal waiver to exclude sugar-sweetened beverages as items that may be purchased under SNAP.
- Requires the Director to reapply for that waiver annually if it is not approved.
- Would have defined which products constitute "sugar-sweetened beverages" for this purpose (**VETOED**).

Ohio Benefits Program transfer

- Authorizes the Director of Administrative Services to transfer the Director's responsibility for administering the Ohio Benefits Program to the JFS Director.
- Authorizes the OBM Director to make budget and accounting changes to implement the program's transfer and makes an appropriation based on those changes.

Public assistance benefits eligibility systems

- Requires JFS to update the systems used to determine eligibility for public assistance benefits, in a manner that allows information input by individual caseworkers to be tracked and audited.
- Requires CDJFSs to provide caseworker training about improper determinations.

Vocational rehabilitation assessment and support

- Permits the JFS Director to refer certain recipients of SNAP and Ohio Works First (OWF) benefits for vocational rehabilitation assessment and support services.
- Exempts certain benefits recipients from the requirements if they are determined to be unable to work by the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities agency, or otherwise meet minimum SNAP and OWF work requirements.
- Terminates SNAP or OWF benefits for recipients required to participate in vocational rehabilitation assessment and support services who fail to do so and do not satisfy minimum work requirements for SNAP and OWF.

Notice of waiver or state plan amendment

- Requires the JFS Director to submit a copy of any public assistance waiver or state plan amendment to the Speaker of the House, Senate President, and the chairpersons of the relevant committees of the House and Senate at least 30 days prior to submitting it to the federal government.

Adult Protective Services funding

- Requires JFS to allocate funds for counties' Adult Protective Services costs according to a specified funding formula based on previous allocations, the percentage of older adults in the county, and the percentage of county residents in poverty.
- Allows the Director to adopt rules on the allocation of funds and expenditure reports.

Youth and Family Ombudsmen Office

- Changes "Youth and Family Ombudsman Office" to "Youth and Family Ombudsmen Office."
- Requires the Ombudsmen Office to establish procedures for investigating complaints and to submit its annual report to the DCY Director.
- Allows the Ombudsmen Office to access DCY records.

Unemployment

Technology and customer service fee

- Requires the JFS Director, from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2027, to collect a technology and customer service fee of no more than 0.15% of wages paid per covered

employee from each contributory employer at the same time and in the same manner as the Director collects employer contributions.

- Requires the Director, from December 31, 2025, to December 31, 2027, to collect a technology and customer service fee of no more than $13.50 whenever a nonprofit organization, or group of such organizations, that is a reimbursing employer files or renews a surety bond required under state law.
- Requires technology and customer service fees to be deposited into the Unemployment Compensation Special Administrative Fund.

Temporary employees

- Disqualifies certain temporary employees who fail to inquire about available work assignments from serving a waiting period or receiving unemployment benefits for the duration of the individual's unemployment (instead of just for any week as under prior law).

Deadline for unemployment compensation reports

- Establishes August 1 as the deadline by which the JFS Director annually must submit to the Governor and General Assembly specified reports regarding unemployment compensation that are required under continuing law.

Interest on late employer payments

- Beginning January 1, 2026, changes the annual interest rate for late unemployment employer payments from 14% to the rounded federal short-term rate, not to exceed 15%.

Covered public employers

- Expands the definition of "employer" for purposes of unemployment compensation to include any state, its instrumentalities, and its political subdivisions and their instrumentalities (rather than Ohio, its instrumentalities, and its political subdivisions and their instrumentalities as under prior law).

Seasonal employment determinations

- Requires the JFS Director to determine whether employment is seasonal based on the application for a determination filed by the employer and any other information available.

Income and Eligibility Verification System

- Requires the JFS Director to disclose wage and claim information, on request, to any state or local agency administering a program included in the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) that has entered a written data sharing agreement with the JFS Director that meets federal standards.
- Eliminates a requirement that the Director adopt rules implementing the IEVS.

Unemployment Compensation Review Commission

- Allows the Department of Public Safety's digitalized photographic records to be released to the Unemployment Compensation Review Commission (UCRC).
- Allows a UCRC hearing officer to conduct a hearing by interactive video conference.

Unemployment Compensation Integrity Board

- Creates the Unemployment Compensation Integrity Board to advise and consult with the JFS Director in the administering and enforcing Ohio's Unemployment Compensation Law, including making recommendations to the Director regarding proposed rules or public-private partnerships.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act

- Expressly states that Ohio employers subject to the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act (those with 100 or more employees) must comply with that act, which requires certain employers to provide written notice 60 days before commencing a plant closing or mass layoff as those terms are defined in the WARN Act.
- Allows the JFS Director to issue guidance and procedures to Ohio employers for the submission and review of notices provided under the WARN Act.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGENCY RULE REVIEW

Restatement of principle of law or policy in rule (VETOED)

- Would have required state agencies having a duty under law to review their operations for principles of law or policies that should be restated in administrative rule to complete a review and file a report with the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) by November 30, 2025 (**VETOED**).
- Would have reduced, from six months to three months, the time in which an agency must begin the rulemaking process when it identifies a principle of law or policy that should be restated as a rule or is informed of such a principle or policy through a recommendation from JCARR (**VETOED**).
- Would have prohibited an agency in the process of supplanting a principle of law or policy with a rule from relying on the principle or policy during the rulemaking process if the agency failed to file the rule in final form within one year after specified events occur or if the agency notified JCARR of its intention to file a revised proposed rule (**VETOED**).

Regulatory restrictions in administrative rules (VETOED)

- Would have defined a "regulatory restriction" as "any part of a rule that requires or prohibits an action" for purposes of the law requiring certain state agencies to identify and reduce regulatory restrictions in their administrative rules (**VETOED**).
- Would have required an agency subject to the reduction requirement that achieved its statutorily required reduction to eliminate one regulatory restriction for each new regulatory restriction the agency adopted (**VETOED**).
- Would have specified, for an agency that must eliminate two regulatory restrictions for each new regulatory restriction because it failed to meet the reduction deadline, that removing or replacing "shall," "must," "require," or similar words from a rule would not eliminate a regulatory restriction unless the removal eliminated a requirement or prohibition (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed JCARR to recommend the General Assembly adopt a concurrent resolution invalidating a rule proposed by a covered agency if the agency proposed removing or replacing "shall," "must," "require," or similar words in the rule without removing a regulatory restriction (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed a state agency subject to a statewide cap on regulatory restrictions to appear before JCARR to show cause why it should be permitted to adopt a rule that would cause the number of restrictions to exceed the cap (**VETOED**).
- Would have eliminated a requirement that a state agency contact JCARR before submitting a proposed rule containing a regulatory restriction for a determination whether adopting the restriction would cause the agency to exceed the statewide limit (**VETOED**).

Proposed and revised proposed rules (VETOED)

- Would have allowed JCARR to request an agency designee to appear and answer questions when a rule summary and fiscal analysis (RSFA) for a rule proposed by the agency indicated the rule would have specified economic effects (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the JCARR Executive Director to inform members of the General Assembly when the RSFA for a proposed rule filed by an agency indicated the rule would have specified economic effects (**VETOED**).
- Would have allowed JCARR to take one of several actions, including referring a proposed rule for review by the full General Assembly, after an agency designee appeared (or failed to appear) to answer questions about a proposed rule when the RSFA indicated the rule would have specified economic effects (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the General Assembly to enact a bill approving the adoption of a rule referred to it by JCARR before the rule could take effect (**VETOED**).

Rule review and recission (VETOED)

- Would have automatically invalidated a rule, and prohibited enforcement or reliance on it, if the adopting agency failed to review the rule in accordance with state law for one year after the rule's assigned review date (**VETOED**).
- Would have required JCARR to solicit an explanation of a rule's rescission from the agency proposing the recission, including a statement as to whether the agency intended to continue relying on a principle of law or policy stated in the rescinded rule (**VETOED**).

JOINT MEDICAID OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

- Transfers legislative oversight for the Medicaid program from the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) to the standing committees in the House and Senate that primarily consider Medicaid legislation, and transfers support for that work from JMOC staff to the Legislative Service Commission; see the LSC entries below for more information.

JUDICIARY/SUPREME COURT

Dissemination of fabricated and private sexual images

- Creates the offenses of nonconsensual dissemination and nonconsensual creation of fabricated sexual images.
- Modifies law to allow the dissemination of an image or a fabricated sexual image if the person in the image is age 18 or older and the person is knowingly and willingly in a state of nudity or engaged in sexual conduct and is knowingly and willingly in a location where the person does not have a reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Allows for the dissemination of fabricated sexual images under certain circumstances.
- Allows a victim of nonconsensual dissemination or nonconsensual creation of fabricated sexual images to commence a civil action against the offender.
- Allows the court to order a person who is convicted of nonconsensual dissemination or nonconsensual creation of fabricated sexual images or who is adjudicated a delinquent child by reason of committing that offense to criminally forfeit specified property acquired or maintained as a result of committing the offense.

Online availability of dockets

- Requires the common pleas clerk to make available online the court's general docket pertaining to criminal cases.
- Requires that the general docket of each probate court be made available online on the clerk of court's website.

Reduction of fees for computerization

- Effective December 30, 2025, reduces the fees that that the clerk of a common pleas court can charge for deposit into the computerization fund by 50% if the court fails to make civil, criminal, and probate dockets available online.

Common pleas clerk

- Requires clerk of the common pleas court to determine and implement the best means and methods for storing, maintaining, and retrieving all papers delivered to the clerk.

Special projects funds

- Prohibits fees collected by municipal, county, common pleas, and appeals courts for special projects of the court from being used for training or education that takes place outside of the state.

Payment for acting judges

- Removes the requirement that county and municipal courts submit quarterly requests to the Administrative Director of the Supreme Court for reimbursements of per diem compensation paid to acting judges.

Sealing and expungement

- Removes a reference to records of conviction that cannot be sealed or expunged that previously applied to sealing and expunging official records in which a person is found not guilty, proceedings are dismissed, a grand jury no bill is entered, or a pardon is granted.

Sealing juvenile records

- Requires the juvenile court to seal certain juvenile records if the court finds that the harm to the person in having the records pertaining to the case disclosed is not outweighed by the potential benefits to the public in having access to those records.

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

- Transfers legislative oversight of the state's Medicaid program from the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) to the standing committees in the House and Senate that primarily consider Medicaid legislation, and support for that work from JMOC staff to LSC.
- Requires LSC to research and review Medicaid reports, legislation, and other related materials and present this information to the standing Medicaid committees at joint meetings of the committees.
- Requires LSC, instead of JMOC, to contract biennially with an actuary to calculate the projected medical inflation rate and for the standing committees, rather than JMOC, to approve or reject the actuary's calculated rate.
- Updates and modernizes LSC duties related to rule codification and maintaining a uniform Ohio Administrative Code.
- Transfers from LSC's administrative rules to statute the required formats for presenting changes in bills and resolutions.
- Abolishes four LSC funds and transfers the cash balances to the GRF.

LOTTERY COMMISSION

Cashing out lottery prize annuities

- Allows a lottery prize winner who previously agreed to be paid in installments via an annuity to cash out the full amount of the annuity only in a single transaction, unless the Lottery Commission's (LOT) rules permit additional transfers.
- Prohibits a transferee from then transferring the annuity rights to a third person.
- Modifies the type of independent professional advice a winner must receive, and from whom the winner may receive it, before the transfer can occur.
- Requires signed documentation that the winner received independent professional advice.

Withholding from gambling winnings

- Changes the person responsible for withholding taxes and certain debts from lottery sports gaming and video lottery terminal (VLT) winnings that meet or exceed a threshold amount.
- Specifies that the sports gaming proprietor generally is responsible for withholding all amounts from lottery sports gaming winnings, including in a VLT facility (racino).
- Requires LOT to withhold all amounts from lottery sports gaming winnings won on a terminal that also offers other lottery games.
- Clarifies that the video lottery sales agent who operates a VLT facility must withhold all amounts from VLT prize winnings.
- Applies the changes described above beginning on January 1, 2026.
- Eliminates requirements that at the end of each calendar year, a video lottery sales agent, casino operator, or sports gaming proprietor give the Tax Commissioner a copy of each patron's IRS Form W-2G for the year.

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAID

Medicaid eligibility

Coverage of expansion eligibility group

- Requires the Department of Medicaid (ODM) to immediately terminate medical assistance for members of the Medicaid expansion eligibility group (Group VIII) if the federal government sets the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) below 90%.
- Requires ODM, not later than 15 days following a change in the FMAP as described above, to certify the state and federal shares of the total actual expenditures for Group VIII for the most recently completed month before the change.
- Establishes procedures for keeping those state share amounts within the General Revenue Fund during each fiscal year in the biennium, before transferring those amounts to the Budget Stabilization Fund or Expanded Sales Tax Holiday Fund.
- If medical assistance is terminated as described above during FY 2026 or FY 2027, requires ODM to establish a phased transition plan to assist former members of Group VIII by redirecting them to private insurance subsidies or charity care programs.

Group VIII eligibility redeterminations

- To the extent permissible under federal law, requires ODM to conduct eligibility redeterminations for members of Group VIII every six months.

ABD group

- Requires the Auditor of State to conduct an audit of the Medicaid program to determine whether individuals in the aged, blind, and disabled (ABD) population are ineligible for Medicaid.
- Requires the audit to specifically examine if individuals in the ABD group have countable assets that exceed the federal asset limits for Medicaid.
- Upon the conclusion of the audit, requires ODM to implement a corrective action plan including enumerated components, designed to reduce spending for individuals in the ABD group.
- Eliminates outdated law that (1) permits Medicaid eligibility requirements for the ABD population to be more restrictive than those under the Supplemental Security Income Program and (2) requires those more restrictive requirements to be consistent with the federal 209(b) option for Medicaid eligibility.

Change in circumstances eligibility verification

- Requires ODM to issue one or more requests for information relating to Medicaid eligibility data and operations, to identify and assess systems and solutions that may be able to improve or augment the management, efficiency, frequency, and accuracy of eligibility determinations and processing.

- Requires ODM to consider augmenting vendor arrangements relating to processing and managing Medicaid eligibility cases.
- Authorizes ODM to procure one or more vendors to implement any solutions identified as cost effective and feasible.
- Requires any vendor compensation to be performance-based.
- Requires ODM to prepare and submit a report to the chairpersons of the House and Senate committees overseeing Medicaid detailing findings from the requests for information and any considerations related to those requests.

Waiver for reentry services

- Requires ODM to establish a Medicaid waiver component to provide services to Medicaid-eligible inmates for 90 days prior to release.

Continuous enrollment for children (VETOED)

- Would have repealed law that requires ODM to seek approval to provide continuous Medicaid enrollment for Medicaid-eligible children from birth through age three (**VETOED**).

Eligibility fraud restitution

- Permits a court to order restitution of 200% of the amount paid for Medicaid services provided for a person found guilty of Medicaid eligibility fraud, instead of requiring restitution of 100%.

Workforce development study

- Requires ODM to conduct a comprehensive study on the feasibility, legality, and potential cost savings of establishing a Medicaid waiver component imposing work requirements for Medicaid recipients and includes additional supplemental workforce development requirements.
- Requires the Medicaid Director to submit a report by September 1, 2026, detailing ODM's findings and any policy recommendations.

Nursing facilities

Case-mix score grouper methodology

- When determining a nursing facility's case-mix score, requires ODM to use the grouper methodology used on October 1, 2019 (instead of June 30, 1999), for the patient driven payment model nursing index for prospective payments of skilled nursing facilities under the Medicare program.
- Adds a multiplier to nursing facility direct care cost per case-mix units, due to the difference in scale between the old resource utilization group (RUG) model and the new patient driven payment model (PDPM).
- Modifies the authority of ODM to adopt rules concerning case-mix scores.

Patient driven payment model

- Provides for a gradual implementation of the PDPM by providing an alternative calculation for the first half of FY 2026.
- Requires ODM to report quarterly to the General Assembly on the progress of transitioning to the patient driven payment model.
- States that these changes are intended to be budget neutral during FYs 2026 and 2027.

Quality incentive payment

- Eliminates law specifying that if a nursing facility undergoes a change of owner with an effective date of July 1, 2023, or later, the facility cannot receive a Medicaid quality incentive payment for a specified period of time.
- Extends from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2025, the law prohibiting a nursing facility from receiving a Medicaid quality incentive payment for a specified period of time if the facility undergoes a change of operator.

Personal needs allowance (VETOED)

- Would have increased the Medicaid personal needs allowance for nursing facility and ICF/IID residents on Medicaid from $50 to $75 for individuals and from $100 to $150 for married couples (**VETOED**).

Waiver of ineligibility period

- Permits, rather than requires, ODM under certain circumstances to grant a waiver to a resident of a nursing facility who is ineligible to receive nursing facility services due to the individual or individual's spouse disposing of assets for less than fair market value.

Nursing facility dialysis services (VETOED)

- For FY 2026 and FY 2027, would have required ODM to pay an add-on of $110 per treatment for dialysis services provided in a nursing facility to a Medicaid recipient (**VETOED**).

Medicaid providers

Home and community-based services (HCBS) direct care workers

- Requires ODM, jointly with the Department of Aging and the Department of Developmental Disabilities, to collect provider data regarding direct care worker wages paid for services provided under Medicaid HCBS waivers, and submit a report to the Governor and specified members of the General Assembly.

Freestanding birthing centers (VETOED)

- Would have required a hospital with a maternity unit that accepts Medicaid to enter into a transfer agreement with any freestanding birthing center located within a 30-mile radius that requests one (**VETOED**).

Medicaid services

Social gender transition

- Prohibits the distribution of Medicaid funds to provide mental health services that promote or affirm social gender transition.

Rapid whole genome sequencing

- Requires the Director to provide Medicaid reimbursement for rapid whole genome sequencing to infants under one year old with complex or acute unexplained illnesses.

MyCare Ohio

- Requires the Director to continue to expand the Integrated Care Delivery System (ICDS, also known as "MyCare Ohio"), or its successor program, to all Ohio counties.
- Requires the Director to select the entities for the expanded program.
- Requires ODM to establish requirements for care management and coordination of waiver services, subject to enumerated requirements.
- Authorizes ODM to include a Fully Integrated Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan established in accordance with federal law as a replacement for the ICDS.

Care management system

MCO data cross checks

- Requires ODM to conduct a request for information to establish the feasibility of requiring Medicaid managed care organizations (MCOs) to conduct internal data cross checks.

Automatic enrollment in MCO plan (VETOED)

- Would have permitted individuals participating in the Medicaid care management system to select a Medicaid MCO plan in which to enroll (**VETOED**).
- Would have required ODM to randomly assign the individual to a plan without giving preference to a specific MCO plan or group of plans, if an individual does not select a Medicaid MCO plan (**VETOED**).
- Would have required ODM to notify the General Assembly, the LSC Director, and the Auditor of State within 30 days if it determines it cannot satisfy those requirements (**VETOED**).

Managed care dashboard

- Requires ODM to include on its managed care financial dashboard both (1) actuarial metrics for annual and quarterly cost reports for specified Medicaid populations and (2) quarterly and annual composite per member per month category of service reports.

Special programs

Medicaid buy-in for workers with disabilities

- Eliminates the requirement that individuals whose income exceeds 150% of federal poverty guidelines must pay an annual premium as a condition of qualifying for the Medicaid buy-in for workers with disabilities program.

Hospital Additional Payments Program

- Establishes the Hospital Additional Payments Program for inpatient and outpatient hospital services provided to enrollees in the Medicaid care management system at in-state hospitals.

Rural Ohio Hospital Tax Pilot

- Permits the Director to establish the Rural Ohio Hospital Tax Pilot Program for directed payments to certain rural Ohio hospitals.
- Permits counties in which the pilot program operates to establish a local hospital assessment to provide the nonfederal share of Medicaid payments made under the pilot program.

State directed payment programs

- Establishes conditions that must be satisfied upon the creation of a Medicaid state directed payment program that is funded in a manner other than by ODM or the hospital franchise fee program.
- Generally limits state directed payment programs to those established for hospital providers and services or professional services provided by hospitals, and to one state directed payment program per identified provider class.
- Prohibits ODM from establishing more than 50 state directed payment programs during a fiscal biennium.
- Prohibits the Director from establishing a state directed payment program if there is no available or sufficient federal or local funding to sustain the program or the federal government requires the state to utilize general revenue funds as a condition of establishing the program.
- Prohibits ODM from utilizing more than 2% of funds received to support a state directed payment program for administration of state directed payment programs, and not more than 2% of those funds for administration of ODM and the Medicaid program.
- Requires ODM to prepare and submit quarterly reports to LSC and the chairpersons of the House and Senate standing committees overseeing Medicaid regarding any new state directed payment programs.

340B grantees

- For purposes of the interaction between Medicaid MCOs, third-party administrators, and 340B covered entities under the federal 340B Drug Pricing Program, removes certain hospitals from the list of entities included as 340B covered entities and instead refers to these entities as 340B grantees.
- Prohibits a contract between a Medicaid MCO, third-party administrator, and 340B grantee from including a payment rate for a prescribed drug provided by a 340B grantee that is less than the payment rate for health care providers that are not 340B grantees.
- Requires a Medicaid MCO or third-party administrator to provide a payment rate for all prescribed drugs obtained through the federal 340B Pricing Program by providers that are not 340B grantees that equals the payment rate for those drugs under the Medicaid state plan.
- Specifies that payments made under payment rates specified in a contract between Medicaid MCOs, third-party administrators, and 340B grantees are subject to audit by ODM.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Prohibits Medicaid funds from being used for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

Medicaid separate line items

- Requires the OBM Director, in consultation with the Medicaid Director, to request and propose multiple Medicaid health care services GRF appropriation line items in subsequent state budgets.

Right of recovery

- Permits an individual who was a recipient of medical assistance and repaid money between April 6, 2007, and September 28, 2007, to ODM or a county department of job and family services pursuant to a right of recovery, to request a hearing regarding those payments.
- Authorizes any of the following to request a hearing: (1) a medical assistance recipient, (2) the authorized representative, (3) the executor or administrator of the estate, (4) a court-appointed guardian, or (5) an attorney directly retained by a recipient, or the recipient's parent, or legal or court-appointed guardian.

Hospital Care Assurance Program; franchise permit fee

- Eliminates the sunset of the Hospital Care Assurance Program and franchise permit fee that were set to terminate the program and assessment on October 16, 2025.

Appeal of hospital assessment or audit

- Specifies that a final reconciliation of an annual hospital assessment constitutes an interim final order.

- Permits a hospital that requests reconsideration of a preliminary determination of an assessment imposed on the hospital to submit its written materials to ODM by (1) regular mail, (2) electronic mail, or (3) in-person delivery.
- Eliminates a requirement that ODM hold a public hearing if one or more hospitals requests a reconsideration of a preliminary determination of an assessment to be imposed upon the hospital.
- When a hospital appeals a final determination of its annual assessment, clarifies that the complete record of the proceedings includes all documentation considered by ODM in issuing the final determination.
- Requires a hospital to seek a declaratory judgment, rather than appeal the results of an audit conducted by ODM, when the audit determines the hospital paid amounts to ODM that the hospital should not have been required to pay or paid amounts it should have been required to pay.
- When seeking a declaratory judgment, requires a hospital to deposit any funds that are not in dispute into the Hospital Care Assurance Program fund while judicial proceedings are pending.

Visit verification system (VETOED)

- Would have imposed duties on, and granted authority to, ODM, the Department of Developmental Disabilities, Medicaid MCOs, and other entities authorized to pay Medicaid claims in the event the Medicaid Director established an electronic visit verification system in rule (**VETOED**).

Quarterly expenditures form

- Requires the Director to immediately provide notice if the federal government takes certain actions related to the Quarterly Medicaid Statement of Expenditures Form submitted by ODM

Reports regarding fraud, waste, and abuse

- Modifies ODM's reporting requirements regarding fraud, waste, and abuse in the Medicaid program to require additional information.
- Requires that these reports be submitted to LSC and the chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate committees overseeing Medicaid.
- Removes a requirement that ODM's report be made available to the public on request.

Presumptive eligibility error rate quarterly report

- Requires ODM to submit a quarterly report to the General Assembly detailing the presumptive eligibility error rate for the previous quarter.

Legislative notice of amendments and waivers

- Requires ODM to provide notice to LSC and the House and Senate committees overseeing Medicaid before seeking an amendment to the Medicaid state plan or a Medicaid waiver that would (1) expand Medicaid coverage to any additional class of individuals or (2) increase any net costs to the state.
- Requires ODM to provide those committees with updates regarding the status of any amendment or waiver.

Audit of Next Generation

- Requires the Auditor of State to conduct a performance and fiscal audit of ODM's Next Generation system and submit copies of the audit report to the standing committees of the House and the Senate that oversee Medicaid and to LSC by December 31, 2027.

STATE MEDICAL BOARD

Summary suspensions

- Revises the law authorizing the State Medical Board to issue summary suspensions against its license holders, including by specifying that a summary suspension is not a final appealable order and is not an adjudication that may be appealed under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Certified mental health assistants

- Revises the law governing certified mental health assistants to correspond with the law governing other health care professionals licensed by the Board.

Medical Quality Assurance Fund

- Establishes procedures for transferring money in the Medical Quality Assurance Fund to the Board's monitoring organization under contract to operate the Confidential Monitoring Program for impaired practitioners.
- Requires the monitoring organization, in collaboration with the Ohio State Medical Association and Ohio Hospital Association, to create a foundation to be operated solely for supporting programs for impaired practitioners.
- Requires the monitoring organization to transfer the money it receives from the Medical Quality Assurance Fund to the foundation's governing board.
- Requires the foundation's governing board to approve an annual plan for disbursement of funds held by the foundation, with the initial disbursement to occur by January 1, 2026.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of Wildlife

- Increases, from $74 to $210, the fee for each nonresident deer permit.
- Increases various fishing license fees charged to a nonresident who is not a resident of a reciprocal state.
- Expands the allowable uses for hunting and fishing related gift certificates.
- Makes permissive, instead of mandatory, the Chief of the Division of Wildlife's authority to adopt rules governing hunting and fishing related gift certificates.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Chief establish fees for gift certificates that equal the total fee for the applicable license, permit, or stamp.
- Eliminates the requirement that a gift certificate expire one year after purchase.
- Allows a resident landowner's parents to hunt and trap on the landowner's property without a hunting license, deer permit, wild turkey permit, or fur taker permit.
- Allows a resident landowner's grandchildren under 18 to hunt and trap on the landowner's property without a deer permit, wild turkey permit, or fur taker permit.
- Clarifies that, for both in-state and out-of-state residents who own land in Ohio, the landowner's spouse may hunt deer or wild turkey and hunt or trap fur-bearing animals on that property without a deer, wild turkey, or fur taker permit.
- Revises what constitutes a "wild boar" or "feral swine" for purposes of the law governing hunting and fishing.

Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management

Permit to plug and abandon fee

- Eliminates the $250 permit fee generally required to be paid when applying for a permit to plug and abandon any oil and gas well.

Oil and Gas Resolution and Remediation Fund (VETOED)

- Would have created the Oil and Gas Resolution and Remediation Fund (OGRRF) in the state treasury (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management to use money in the OGRRF to plug orphaned wells in accordance with state law (**VETOED**).
- Would have authorized the Chief to use the OGRRF for expenses that are critical and necessary for the protection of human health and safety and the environment related to oil and gas production (**VETOED**).

- Would have required the Treasurer of State, at the beginning of each fiscal year, to transfer the amount of money in the Oil and Gas Well Fund that exceeds the total amount appropriated to it for that fiscal year to the OGRRF (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the Treasurer to make disbursements, other than interest earnings, from the ORGRRF on a quarterly basis, on order of the Chief (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the $50 filing fee for an exempt domestic well or exempt Mississippian well (that may be filed in lieu of posting a surety bond) and any funds collected by the Chief from corrective action orders to be deposited into the OGRRF instead of the Oil and Gas Well Fund (**VETOED**).
- Would have required interest earned on the OGRRF to be reserved for use by the ODNR Director for any ODNR-related purpose, subject to the written approval of the Technical Advisory Council on Oil and Gas (**VETOED**).

Oil and gas orders – appeals

- Allows the Oil and Gas Commission to decide an appeal of an order of the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management or a rule adopted by the Chief without a hearing when, in its judgment, it is appropriate to do so.

Division of Water Resources – H2Ohio (VETOED)

- Would have prohibited H2Ohio Fund money from being used to purchase land or a conservation easement (**VETOED**).

Division of Parks and Watercraft

New funds

- Creates the Park Lodges, Maintenance, and Repair Fund and the Parks and Watercraft Holding Fund, both in the state treasury, and specifies the purposes of each fund.

Watercraft registration and fees

- Allows a required watercraft registration certificate to be presented in digital form in lieu of a physical form.
- Allows a registration certificate to be presented in digital form within 72 hours of when a watercraft that is not numbered is stopped by a law enforcement officer in lieu of a physical form.
- Applies the 72-hour registration certificate presentment requirement to kayaks and inflatable watercraft meeting the definition of a paddle craft.
- Specifies that these provisions take effect January 1, 2027.

Rules governing preventing ice on state park's water

- Prohibits the levying of a permit fee if the Chief of the Division of Parks and Recreation adopts rules for the issuance of a permit for preventing or limiting ice formation on the surface of water located in a state park on property owned or managed by the Division.

Division of Natural Areas and Preserves

- Allows the Chief of the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves to sell merchandise and other items related to, or that promote, the state's wildlife and unique environment, and general ecological preservation and conservation.
- Requires the money received from the sale of merchandise to be paid into the state treasury to the credit of the Natural Areas and Preserves Fund.

Division of Mineral Resources Management

Long-term Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund

- Creates in the state treasury the Long-Term Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to be administered by the Chief of the Division of Mineral Resources Management.
- Specifies that the fund must consist of federal grants from the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund, to be used for the abatement of the causes and the treatment of the effects of acid mine drainage resulting from coal mine practices.

Qualifications/exams for certain mining positions

- Repeals provisions of Ohio's mine and quarry law that:
  - Specify the qualifications for fire bosses, shot firers, and forepersons of surface maintenance facilities; and
  - Require that the Chief to conduct examinations for those positions and issue certificates to applicants who pass their examinations.
- Specifies that for mine forepersons, forepersons, mine electricians, and surface mine blasters, the Chief must provide examinations "as needed" instead of "quarterly or more often as required."
- Repeals the requirement that public notice be given announcing the time and place for upcoming examinations.

Program Support Fund

- Codifies the Program Support Fund, which supports ODNR's centralized service support offices using payments from divisions within ODNR and other payments received for purposes of the fund.

Dredging operations (VETOED)

- Would have prohibited ODNR, when conducting, or contracting with a third party to conduct, dredging operations in the waters of the state, from requiring a license, registration, or certification for an individual to operate the dredging equipment or watercraft associated with such operations (**VETOED**).

ODNR contracts with local governments (VETOED)

- Would have required ODNR to enter into a contract with municipal corporations on Lake Erie islands to reimburse them for expenses incurred in providing certain services on state park land or at facilities owned or managed by ODNR if ODNR does not provide the services (**VETOED**).

Local consent prior to altering a historical site

- Prohibits ODNR from physically working on or altering an oil and gas historical site without the consent of certain local entities.

BOARD OF NURSING

- Establishes an additional ground upon which the Board of Nursing may impose discipline on the holder of a nursing license or dialysis technician certificate – that the holder failed to cooperate with a Board-conducted investigation.

OIL AND GAS LAND MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Standard leases (VETOED)

- Would have required the standard oil and gas lease used by state agencies to include an option to extend the primary term of the lease for an additional five years (rather than three years) (**VETOED**).
- Would have required the standard lease also to include specific provisions governing the payment of rentals and bonus amounts; tolling of the lease term; shut-in royalty payments; and deferments (**VETOED**).

Bids and leases for exploration on state-owned land (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Would have required a state agency, when entering into a lease with a person for the exploration and development of oil and gas on state-owned land, to fully execute the lease within 30 days after the Oil and Gas Land Management Commission selects the person with the highest and best bid (**VETOED**).
- Would have prohibited a state agency and the Commission from charging any additional fee (that is not specifically authorized or required) to a person bidding or entering into a lease to explore and develop oil and gas on state-owned land (**VETOED**).
- Allows the person so bidding to offer an extra gross landowner royalty in addition to the required $^{1}/_{8}$ gross landowner royalty amount and any proposed lease bonus.

STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY

Instruments to reduce drug poisoning

- Expands, beyond fentanyl testing strips, the items that may be lawfully possessed and used to test for the presence of drugs and to prevent drug poisoning, without being considered in violation of the criminal prohibition against drug paraphernalia.
- Requires the State Board of Pharmacy to adopt rules for approving additional types of instruments that may be possessed and used because they demonstrate efficacy in reducing drug poisoning by determining the presence of specific compounds.

Wholesale and retail drug distributors

- Expressly requires the Board to license out-of-state business operations involved in retail and wholesale drug sales: terminal distributors, wholesale distributors, outsourcing facilities, third-party logistics providers, repackagers, and manufacturers.
- Increases the fees for issuing and renewing licenses for in-state terminal distributors.
- Requires licensed drug distributors to have a responsible person designated and available at all times, to notify the Board of the person designated, and to pay a fee to make a change.
- Increases the fees for issuing and renewing registration for pharmacy technicians.

OFFICE OF PUBLIC DEFENDER

- Allows the Ohio Public Defender (OPD) to contract with private counsel to provide legal representation in parole, probation, community control, and post-release control revocation matters when the Public Defender does not have capacity to handle a matter.
- Creates the Northwest Regional Hub pilot program.
- Requires each county to submit a biannual indigent defense cost projection report to OPD by July 31, 2026, with data on the most current projected costs of the indigent defense services in the county for the next two upcoming fiscal years.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Motor vehicle registration and title

Additional registration and renewal fees

- Beginning January 1, 2026, increases the additional annual motor vehicle registration and renewal fees from $11 to $16 for noncommercial vehicles and from $30 to $35 for nonapportioned commercial vehicles.

Veterans

- Exempts a disabled veteran from the $1 transfer fee that applies when a person transfers the registration and license plate from one vehicle to another if the license plate is:
  - A license plate honoring military service or a military award; or
  - A disabled veteran license plate.
- Expands which disabled veterans are exempt from paying motor vehicle registration and service fees by exempting a veteran who has a service-connected disability that is compensated at 100% by the U.S. Veterans Administration in the same manner as if the veteran has a disability rating of 100%.

Deputy registrar/BMV service fee

- Increases from $5 to $8 the service fee charged by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) and deputy registrars.
- Requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to modify the prorated multi-year registration service fee to account for the increase.
- Allocates the $3 increase to the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP).

BMV electronic and online transactions

- Authorizes the Registrar and a deputy registrar to accept electronically:
  - Documents that are required to accompany the services and transactions that the BMV conducts electronically or online; and
  - Documents approved by the Registrar for electronic or online submission and acceptance.
- Authorizes a person to apply for an initial motor vehicle registration and a transfer of motor vehicle registration through the online system established by the Registrar, similar to registration renewals under continuing law.
- Requires the Registrar or deputy registrar to verify and authenticate any associated documents submitted electronically with those registrations.
- Allocates the service fee and postage costs for those online and electronic submissions.

Vehicle registration by telephone

- Eliminates the requirement that the BMV accept motor vehicle registration renewal payments via telephone.

Special license plates

- Regarding contributions collected for the Ohio Natural Energy Foundation license plate, requires the Registrar to pay contributions previously collected for payment to the now defunct Ohio Oil and Gas Energy Education Foundation and the Ohio Natural Energy Institute to the Ohio Natural Energy Foundation.
- Regarding the contributions for the National Council of Negro Women license plate, which under prior law were required to be paid to the National Council of Negro Women, Incorporated, requires the Registrar to pay the contributions to the Ohio State Coalition-National Council of Negro Women, Incorporated.

Certificates of title

- Allows an applicant for a motor vehicle certificate of title to use the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number on the title application if the application is for either:
  - A salvage certificate for an owner-retained vehicle; or
  - A transfer of title to an insurance company or a nonprofit corporation.
- Beginning January 1, 2026, increases the general certificate of title fee required for most motor vehicles, all-purpose vehicles, and off-highway motorcycles from $15 to $18.
- Allocates the $3 increase to the OSHP through the Security, Investigations, and Policing Fund.
- Authorizes a board of county commissioners to raise the fee an additional $5 for certificates of title issued in that county.
- Allocates the $5 increase to the clerk of a court of common pleas who issues the certificate of title.

Commercial motor vehicles

Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse notifications

- Updates Ohio Commercial Motor Vehicle Laws to reflect federal requirements related to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse (DAC) notifications to the Registrar, as follows:
  - Prohibits a commercial driver's license temporary instruction permit (CLP) or commercial driver's license (CDL) holder from operating a commercial motor vehicle if the holder has violated certain alcohol or controlled substances prohibitions;
  - Prohibits the Registrar from issuing, renewing, or upgrading a CLP or CDL if the Registrar receives notice from DAC of that alcohol or controlled substance violation;

- Establishes procedures for the Registrar to downgrade or reinstate, as necessary, a CLP or CDL based on notices from DAC.

Limited term commercial driver's license

- Modifies the law governing a CDL issued to a temporary resident to do the following:
  - Exclude the license as a form of photo identification for purposes of voting;
  - Make it consistent with the federal REAL ID Act and state law for the issuance of a standard limited term license;
  - Clarify that the expiration date is either the expiration date of the holder's authorized stay in the U.S. or four years, whichever date is earliest, or is one year if there is no set expiration date;
  - Authorizes the renewal of the limited term CDL within 180 days of its expiration, provided the temporary resident can verify his or her continued lawful status in the U.S.; and
  - Specifies that the renewal may not take place through the BMV's online service, but must be conducted in person at a deputy registrar agency.

Hazardous materials endorsement

- Authorizes issuance of a hazardous materials endorsement for a CDL driver who is 18 to 20 years old, provided:
  - The driver only transports hazardous materials within Ohio; and
  - The driver meets all other federal and state requirements for the endorsement.

Driver's licenses and state identification cards

- Requires individuals 18 to 21 to complete the full driver's education course and 50 hours of practice driving with an eligible adult in order to obtain an initial driver's license, instead of just individuals under 18.
- Modifies the abbreviated driver training course for adults to apply to individuals 21 and older.
- Authorizes a beginning driver to complete the driver's education course at any point while holding a temporary instruction permit.
- Eliminates the six-month validity period for a medically restricted driver's license and instead requires the Registrar to determine the validity period.
- Increases the number of reprints of an Ohio credential (e.g., driver's license, CDL, identification card) that a person may obtain from the BMV between initial issuance and renewal or between renewals from one reprint to two reprints.

Proof of financial responsibility

- Extends, from 10 to 15 days, the time by which a person may request an administrative hearing after a driver's license suspension order is issued by the Registrar for failure to have proof of financial responsibility (i.e., motor vehicle insurance).
- Expands who may report a driver or owner of a motor vehicle involved in an accident to the BMV for failure to maintain proof of financial responsibility to include any person involved in the accident, as opposed to only the drivers of the vehicles involved in the accident.

Motor vehicle sales

Retail installment contracts

- Authorizes an alternative schedule of installment payments for a retail installment contract that arises out of a consumer transaction that may be used in lieu of the previously existing schedule, which is a schedule of substantially equal payments.
- Specifies that, under the alternative schedule, the scheduled installments may vary, but an individual installment payment cannot be greater than 50% of any other installment payment.

Trailers

- Excludes trailers from the Motor Vehicle Dealers Law, except fifth wheel trailers, park trailers, travel trailers, tent-type fold-out camping trailers, or semitrailers.

Warranty/recall compensation, franchisee indemnity

- Requires a motor vehicle franchisor to compensate its motor vehicle franchisees for the parts and labor related to diagnosing warranty and recall obligations.
- Modifies the time frame from which additional documentation related to the rate for specified repair orders must originate.
- Requires a franchisor to compensate a franchisee for all of the following:
  - A part or a component provided at a reduced cost in addition to those provided at no cost;
  - Costs related to certain rental vehicles, even if the rental vehicle does not match the line-make, size, or category of vehicle that was originally promised to the customer; and
  - At least 1.25% of the average trade-in cost of a used motor vehicle that is the subject of a stop-sale or do-not-drive order when the parts and remedy required to make the necessary repairs take more than 30 days to be provided.
- Exempts recreational vehicle franchisors and franchisees from all of the above requirements.

- Indemnifies a franchisee when a franchisor designates motor vehicle features or equipment as optional.

Classic motor vehicle auction exemption

- Creates a temporary exemption (until August 1, 2026) from the Motor Vehicle Sales Law relating to auctions for a person who auctions classic motor vehicles and collector's motor vehicles under certain parameters.

Emergency service provider "retired" designation

- Requires the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services to establish procedures by which a certificate holder may be designated as "retired" in the Board's records.

Nuclear power plant security

- Excludes certain security personnel and contractors at a commercial nuclear power plant from licensure requirement to engage in the business of security services.

Emergency management assistance compact immunity

- Applies the immunity provisions related to the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which previously applied only to an employee of a political subdivision rendering aid in another state, to any person deployed to render aid in another state by an emergency management agency, including:
  - A full-time or part-time employee of a nonprofit organization; or
  - A paid or unpaid volunteer or health care worker of a for-profit or nonprofit organization.

OSHP jurisdiction

- Expands the jurisdiction of the OSHP to arrest any person who threatens the security of state property in addition to threatening the security of another person, concurrent with the arresting authority of the local law enforcement, under certain circumstances.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Broadband internet access service exemption

- Exempts broadband internet access service from PUCO regulation.
- Prohibits a state agency, commission, or political subdivision from enacting, adopting, or enforcing any provision having the force or effect of law that regulates or has the effect of regulating broadband internet access service.
- Specifies that these prohibitions do not restrict (1) any authority delegated to PUCO or another state agency to administer a state or federal grant program, (2) the application of a law relating to consumer protection and fair competition concerning broadband internet access service, or (3) the authority of any political subdivision to manage access to and use of any public way or public rights-of-way.
- Provides that the broadband internet access service provisions above take effect immediately.

PSB written report

- Reduces the deadline for the chairperson of the Power Siting Board (PSB) to submit a written report to PSB and the applicant from 15 days to five days prior to the date the application is set for a hearing.

EDU behind the meter electric generation service

- Allows an electric distribution utility to supply behind the meter electric generation service if an application for any behind the meter electric generation facilities intended to be used to supply such service was filed with PUCO under former law by March 31, 2025.

Heat maps

- Specifies that each public utility, rather than "entity," that owns or controls a transmission facility in Ohio, and is not a regional transmission organization, must create a heat map.
- Repeals the law that explicitly exempts municipally owned electric utilities and electric cooperatives from the requirement that public utilities create a heat map.

Bypassable cost recovery mechanism (VETOED)

- Would have changed the cost recovery mechanism relating to transmission, ancillary, congestion, or any related service for a standard service offer (SSO) that PUCO must adopt for each electric distribution utility providing an SSO from being nonbypassable to being bypassable (**VETOED**).

Rural electric company and energy company TPP tax

- Clarifies a provision of recently enacted utility legislation relating to the tangible personal property (TPP) tax assessment rate for a rural electric company's or energy company's new, repowered, or converted taxable production and new energy conversion equipment.

PUCO final order

- Stipulates that a final order issued by PUCO is affirmed by operation of law if PUCO does not affirm, abrogate, or modify the original order within 90 days after a rehearing request was granted.

Motor vehicle exemption for trailers

- Exempts, from the definitions of "motor vehicle" and "for-hire motor carrier," any trailer used exclusively to transport a single boat between a place of storage and a marina, or a place in or around a marina, not more than ten miles apart, that is drawn or towed no faster than 25 miles per hour, and does not exceed 26,001 pounds.

CRES variable rate conversion exemption

- Corrects a cross-reference error to rules PUCO must adopt governing competitive retail electric service fixed-rate contract conversions to variable rate, which are to be exempt from regulatory restriction reduction requirements.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

- Allows a district public works integrating committee to determine how much of its allocation is awarded to political subdivisions in loans and local debt support, rather than setting a defined amount at not more than 10% of the allocation as in current law.
- Updates the type of local debt support available under the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) by removing the certain forms of assistance, including a pledge of support for any local bond issue.
- Increases the allocation small villages and townships receive from obligations under SCIP from 10% to 12%.

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION AND CORRECTION

Illegal conveyance of communications device

- Specifies that the penalty for illegal conveyance of a communications device onto the grounds of a specified governmental facility is a third degree felony with the imposition of a mandatory prison term, if the offender is an employee of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) or the Department of Youth Services or a contractor or employee of a contractor providing services to DRC or DYS.

Electronic commitment to DRC

- Permits a court of common pleas to enter into an agreement with DRC under which persons may be electronically committed to DRC.
- Specifies that persons sentenced to DRC, or to any institution or place within DRC, must be conveyed by the sheriff initially to an appropriate facility established and maintained by DRC, or committed electronically for reception, examination, observation, and classification.
- Requires the sheriff to convey the sentenced person to DRC or electronically commit the sentenced person to DRC prior to removal of an individual on an out of jurisdiction detainer.
- Requires an offender to be committed to DRC before post-release control may be imposed.

Food service at Ross Correctional Institution

- Requires DRC to create a pilot program in the Ross Correctional Institution to require the Institution to utilize state employees to oversee meals and food service, to the extent that the pilot program does not conflict with existing contracts.

Mandatory drug screens at correctional facilities

- Requires every officer, employee, contractor, or employee of a contractor who is entering the grounds of a state correctional institution be subject to screening to prevent the conveyance of drugs of abuse into the institution.

Body cavity and strip searches

- Prohibits a court or other person from ordering a medical practitioner, or a medical practitioner from otherwise being required, to perform any medical procedure that is inconsistent with the practitioner's expert medical opinion.
- Expands a medical practitioner's, health care institution's, or health care payer's ability to decline to perform, participate in, or pay for any health care service that violates the practitioner's, institution's, or payer's conscience as informed by the moral, ethical, or

religious beliefs or principles held by the practitioner, institution, or payer, to include when the procedure is ordered by a court.

- Modifies the definition of "body cavity search," such that it no longer specifies that the search occurs while the person is detained or arrested for the alleged commission of a misdemeanor or traffic offense.
- Removes consideration of the prior conviction record of a person to be searched from what constitutes allowable probable cause for a law enforcement officer to consider before conducting a search.

Reentry housing near schools

- Prohibits DRC from licensing a halfway house, reentry center, or community residential center that operates within 500 feet of a school or child care center, unless the house or center operated in that proximity prior to the act or prior to the school or child care center locating there.

Intervention in lieu of conviction – placement in CBCF

- Allows for a judge that has determined an offender to have violated an "intervention in lieu of conviction" plan to place the offender under the general control and supervision of a community-based correctional facility.

Population and cost impact statement for legislative bills

- Changes the standard that triggers a requirement that DRC prepare a population and cost impact statement for a bill pending in the General Assembly from the DRC Director determining the bill has "a significant impact" on the population or operating cost of any state correctional institutions to the Director determining it has "more than a de minimus impact" on the population or operating cost of any correctional institutions.

Local jail funding

- Reestablishes DPF Fund 5ZQ0 ALI 501505, Local Jail Grants, with an appropriation of $75 million in FY 2026, and requires DRC to use those funds to provide grants for county jail construction and renovation projects.
- Removes law requiring DRC and the Department of Taxation to rank counties based on tax revenues and need, and requiring counties to provide a portion of the basic project cost tied to their rankings.
- Continues to require DRC to accept and review applications and designate the projects involving the construction and renovation of county jails.
- Directs DRC to target county jails that have the greatest need for construction or renovation work, and projects that would improve substantially the condition, safety, and operational ability of the jail, and benefit jails that are, or will be, used by multiple counties.

RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

State Teachers Retirement Board

- Modifies the State Teachers Retirement Board (STRS Board) by reducing the number of elected Board members from seven to three and adding the Chancellor of Higher Education or the Chancellor's designee, one Treasurer of State's investment designee, and two investment expert members appointed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate President.

- Abolishes the four elected Board member offices whose terms expire on August 31, 2026, 2027, and 2028, respectively, on those dates.

- Specifies that the modification to the Board's membership does not affect the terms of the Board members serving on September 30, 2025 (the provision's effective date).

- Specifies that each appointed Board member who takes office after September 30, 2025, serves at the pleasure of the member's appointing authority.

- Prohibits any appointed Board member who takes office after September 30, 2025, from having contributions on deposit with the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS), and prohibits any other Board member with contributions on deposit with STRS from serving as the Board's Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

- Entitles the appointed and elected Board members to $200 for each regular Board meeting attended, up to $400 per month regardless of the number of meetings held in a month, and to health care benefits comparable to those generally available to STRS employees.

- Exempts Board members from the penalty that impacts the retirement benefit of a retirant who returns to public employment soon after retiring.

Employer pick-up of STRS and SERS employee contributions (VETOED)

- Would have prohibited a school district board from paying employee contributions to STRS on behalf of a superintendent or principal employed by the board, or to the School Employees Retirement System (SERS) on behalf of a treasurer employed by the board, under an employment contract entered on or after September 30, 2025 (**VETOED**).

Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program

- Transfers the administration of the Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program from the Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Board (DC Board) to the Public Employees Retirement Board, and abolishes the DC Board.

Precinct election officials

- Excludes from Public Employee Retirement System membership a person who receives any compensation for service as a precinct election official (election worker) during a calendar year, rather than excluding a person who is paid less than a specified amount for that service.

Alternative retirement plan election or provider change

- Beginning September 30, 2026, permits a public college or university to allow an academic or administrative employee who elects to participate in an alternative retirement plan to sign the election or a form to change providers by electronic signature.

DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Income tax (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Phases-down income tax rates to a flat rate of 2.75% over two years, beginning with the 2025 taxable year.
- Suspends the annual inflation indexing adjustment of income tax brackets and personal exemption amounts for the 2025 and 2026 taxable years.
- Limits taxpayers from claiming the joint filer credit and any personal and dependent exemptions if the taxpayer's income is greater than $750,000 in taxable year 2025 or $500,000 in taxable year 2026 or thereafter.
- Requires TAX to adjust employer withholding tables as a result of the income tax rate changes, but caps those adjustments per fiscal year.
- Establishes November 3, 2025, as the last date for investments to qualify for the small business investment income tax credit.
- Increases the maximum educator expenses income tax deduction from $250 to $300.
- Authorizes a personal income tax deduction of up to $750 per year for contributions to a qualifying pregnancy resource center.
- Expands an income tax deduction for military pay to include the U.S. Space Force.
- Repeals an income tax credit for contributions to certain state political candidates.
- Would have repealed the personal income tax credit for tuition paid to a nonchartered nonpublic school (**VETOED**).
- Expands the homeschool expense income tax credit by changing the maximum amount of educational expenses the credit can cover, from $250 per return to $250 per student.
- Modifies an income tax add-back for contributions to homeownership savings accounts that were spent on ineligible expenses.
- Reduces the income tax withholding rate on lottery, video lottery, sports gaming, and casino winnings from 4% to 2.75%.
- Authorizes a formal mechanism for private retirement plans to withhold income taxes from a retiree's benefits, similar to pre-existing rules for withholding taxes from state retirement benefits.
- Authorizes all retirement plans to withhold school district income taxes.
- Clarifies that income used as the basis for computing the resident and nonresident tax credits is income calculated after taking the business income deduction, conforming with current administrative practice.

- Establishes a formal income tax withholding "bulk file" program, whereby payroll service companies can file employee income tax withholding returns in bulk on behalf of their employer clients.
- Allows pass-through entities (PTEs) that pay an elective tax to allow their investors to circumvent the federal cap on state and local tax (SALT) deductions to claim certain refundable credits available to those investors when calculating the elective tax due.
- Changes the calculation of tax credits allowed to investors in PTEs that pay the elective PTE tax or a composite income tax for all PTE investors from the investors' proportionate share of the tax paid to the lesser of the tax paid or due.
- Establishes that administrative provisions related to Ohio's electing PTE tax apply to pass-through entities with investors comprised exclusively of Ohio residents.
- Moves the due date for payment of the second and third estimated tax payments for electing and withholding PTE taxes up by one month.
- Would have allowed garnishment of income tax refunds to satisfy judgment debts arising from civil lawsuits (**VETOED**).

School district income tax

- Repeals the school district income tax on estates, beginning in 2026.
- Requires boards of education that approve a resolution to place the question of levying a school district income tax on the ballot to send a copy of the resolution to TAX after it has been certified to the county board of elections.
- Requires boards of elections to send a copy of a petition for an election to repeal a school district income tax to TAX after the board determines the petition is valid.

Municipal income tax

- Clarifies that pay to members of the U.S. Space Force may be deducted from municipal income tax as part of the deduction for military pay.
- Makes discretionary a penalty, mandatory under prior law, charged by TAX for late estimated payments of centrally administered municipal net profit tax.
- Extends, from six to seven months, the municipal net profits tax return extension filing period for taxpayers that do not request a federal income tax extension.
- Allows a taxpayer who received a valid extension of the tax return due date to file a municipal income tax refund claim within three years after that extended due date or the date the tax is paid, whichever is later.
- Allows a taxpayer with an unextended federal income tax return due date that falls after the taxpayer's regular municipal income tax due date to file on or before the later federal due date.

Electric and telephone company municipal income tax

- Requires electric and telephone utility companies to make municipal income tax payments and estimated payments electronically.
- Makes discretionary the current mandatory interest penalty charged for estimated tax underpayments.
- Requires TAX to automatically grant a filing extension to a company if it has received a federal filing extension and expands the length of the municipal tax extension from six to seven months.
- Requires TAX to grant a seven-month filing date extension in the absence of a federal extension if the company submits a request before the return due date.
- Removes the requirement for a company to include certain information in its annual return to TAX.

Sales and use tax (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Repeals the following sales and use tax exemptions and reductions, beginning January 1, 2026:
  - The exemption for certain vehicle rental fees provided to the owner or lessee of a motor vehicle that is being repaired or serviced, where the payments are reimbursed by the service provider.
  - The exemption for refrigerated food vending machines.
  - The exemption for advertising material or catalogs and for items that are used in printing advertising material and equipment primarily used to accept orders.
  - The exemption for property used in acquiring, formatting, editing, storing, and disseminating data or information by electronic publishing.
  - The exemption for the sales of telecommunications services that are used directly and primarily to perform the functions of a qualified call center.
  - The 25% refund of the sales tax paid by electronic information service providers to purchase computers and related electronic equipment.
- Would have also repealed the exemptions for newspapers, for certain copyrighted motion pictures, and for machinery, equipment, and material used in the production for sale of printed materials (**VETOED**).
- Would have prohibited the Tax Credit Authority from entering into an agreement to award a sales and use tax exemption for sales of certain materials used in computer data centers after October 1, 2025 (**VETOED**).
- Beginning January 1, 2026, caps the prompt payment sales and use tax vendor discount, for sales other than the sales of motor vehicles, at $750 per vendor's license per month.

- Requires a clerk of court to remit sales and use tax from the sale of titled watercraft and outboard motors to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles instead of to TAX.
- Requires TAX to consult with DPS on the form of the remittance reports that must accompany the taxes collected.
- Clarifies the definition of a casual sale for sales tax purposes.
- Eliminates interest on sales and use tax refunds for payments made pursuant to a direct payment permit, through which a purchaser pays the tax directly to the state instead of to the vendor making the sale.
- Disallows interest on county sales tax refunds.
- Allows TAX to cancel a sales tax vendor's license obtained while another of the vendor's licenses is suspended.

Resort area gross receipts tax

- Allows municipalities and townships to increase resort area taxes by 0.5% intervals to 2% or 2.5% if approved by electors.

Lodging taxes (PARTIALLY VETOED

- Allows a board of county commissioners to increase the rate of its general lodging tax by not more than 1%, so long as the total rate does not exceed 5%, to fund public safety services in a designated resort area.
- Would have required Ashtabula County to repeal a 2% special lodging tax used to fund the costs of a convention center (**VETOED**).
- Allows a convention and visitors' bureau (CVB) in a county with a population of less than 100,000 with annual lodging tax collections of greater than $500,000 to spend county lodging taxes on public safety services or economic development or infrastructure projects that impact tourism.
- Authorizes the Fairfield County commissioners to renew a special lodging tax, currently scheduled to expire in 2028, for up to 15 additional years at a time.

Commercial activity tax

- Makes a commercial activity tax (CAT) credit for certain net operating losses nonrefundable after 2029, instead of it becoming refundable.
- Eliminates two dedicated CAT funds used to make tangible personal property reimbursement payments to local governments, and instead requires that those payments be made directly from the GRF.

Petroleum activity tax

- Explicitly allows TAX to issue an assessment to collect unpaid petroleum activity tax licensing fees.

County sin taxes

- Authorizes Cuyahoga County to expand its liquor, alcohol, and cigarette taxes, and levy a new tax on vapor and other tobacco products, to finance sports facilities, subject to voter approval of the tax expansion.
- Requires the newly authorized taxes to be equally divided among the major league sports facilities existing in the county during the period that the taxes are levied.
- Allows the newly authorized taxes to cover more than 50% of the total costs of a sports facility and to contribute to the project for more than 20 years, unlike pre-existing alcohol and tobacco taxes upon which those limitations are imposed.
- Includes new community authorities in the definition of "corporation" for purposes of a contract between the county and a corporation for the corporation to build and operate a sports facility funded by sin tax backed bonds.
- Expands authority to levy a county cigarette tax for the benefit of an arts and cultural district from only Cuyahoga County to also include Summit, Hamilton, and Franklin counties.

Marijuana excise tax (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Levies a 10% excise tax on the illegal sale of marijuana by an unlicensed seller.
- Redirects most of the revenue, including from the 10% excise tax on legal sales, to the GRF, while maintaining an allocation for certain dispensary host communities.
- Makes certain administrative changes to the excise tax (**PARTIALLY VETOED**).
- Requires TAX, upon the request of COM, to share pertinent information about the tax violations of an adult use cannabis licensee.

Public utility excise tax

- Applies taxpayer refunds owed for certain public utility excise taxes first to any outstanding state tax debt and any related penalty or interest.

Financial institution tax

- Removes the requirement that TAX post financial institution tax annual report forms on its website.

Insurance premium tax

- Transfers the responsibility of certifying unpaid foreign insurance company premium taxes to the Attorney General for collection from INS to the Treasurer of State.

Severance tax

- Reduces the severance tax rate on coal from 10¢ to 8¢ per ton.

Corporation franchise tax

- Removes the requirement that a corporation identify its statutory agent in an annual report filed under the now-defunct corporation franchise tax.

Replacement tire fee

- Eliminates, beginning in 2026, the 4% discount for wholesale distributors of replacement tires or retail dealers who timely file and pay the replacement tire fee administered by TAX.

Tax credits (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Would have sunset the Ohio historic building preservation tax credit by prohibiting the award of new credits after FY 2027 (**VETOED**).
- Permanently increases the annual cap on the Ohio historic building preservation tax credit, from $60 million to $75 million per fiscal year.
- Increases the percentage of rehabilitation costs certificate owners may claim as credits from 25% to 35% for projects located outside of the state's three largest cities.
- Prohibits DEV from using building vacancy or underutilization as part of the criteria for awarding historic rehabilitation tax credits.
- Repeals the film and Broadway theater capital improvement tax credit, but allows credits issued before the repeal to be claimed.
- Would have sunset the film and Broadway theater production tax credit by prohibiting the award of new credits after the end of FY 2027 (**VETOED**).
- Specifically allows companies that "present," but do not produce, a Broadway theater production to qualify for the film and theater production tax credit.
- Replaces the current two-round application and award process for the film and theater tax credits with a rolling process, eliminating much of the current ranking criteria.
- Allows an applicant for the film and theater tax credit to provide an investment intent letter to demonstrate that it has secured funding equal to at least 50% of its total production budget.
- Modifies reporting requirements for recipients of state-funded low-income housing tax credits and single-family housing development tax credits.
- Increases the annual cap for transformational mixed-used development (TMUD) tax credits from $100 million to $125 million, beginning in FY 2026, allows awards of credits through FY 2027, and makes numerous other changes to the TMUD program (PARTIALLY VETOED).
- Increases the amount of opportunity zone credits that DEV may award in FYs 2026 and 2027 from $25 million to $50 million per fiscal year, sunsets the credit after FY 2027, and makes several other changes to the credit program.

Tax administration

- Extends the time for state recovery of amounts of refunded taxes from local subdivisions from three to six years.
- Authorizes TAX, without violating the prohibition against divulging personal tax information, to disclose either of the following:
  - The amount of revenue distributed to local governments from any tax or fund administered by TAX.
  - Employer income tax withholding account numbers to permit a current or former employee to prepare the employee's tax return.
- Requires taxpayers to provide records for inspection by TAX in an electronic format if the records are kept in such a format.
- Prescribes a process for handling tax notices that are sent by ordinary mail but returned as undeliverable.
- Removes the requirement that taxpayers submit petitions for reassessment to TAX through personal service or certified mail.
- Permits TAX to electronically notify, as an alternative to ordinary mail notice, a person applying for a tax refund if the amount to be refunded is less than what the person requested, but only if the person consents to electronic notice.
- Modifies the manner by which TAX may serve public utility tangible personal property and excise tax assessments and notices.
- Allows a public utility to submit a 30-day extension request to file a public utility tangible personal property or excise tax report or statement by a manner other than in writing that is approved by TAX.
- Repeals the requirement that TAX adopt a rule defining the term "primarily" for purposes of describing who qualifies for the defunct dealers in intangibles tax.
- Removes TAX from a procedure through which the designer of a public building may request allocation of a federal income tax deduction for the design and installation of energy-efficient building systems.
- Makes various technical corrections to the laws governing state taxation.

Property tax (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Would have required reduction of current expense property taxes levied by certain school districts to reduce collections by the amount of the district's carry-over balance in its general operating budget in excess of 40% of its general fund expenditures in the preceding year, excluding amounts reserved for near-term permanent improvements (**VETOED**).

- Prohibits a school district from submitting any new current expense levy, other than a renewal levy, to voters if it has a general fund carry-over balance exceeding 100% of its general fund expenditures for the preceding fiscal year (**VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Prohibits school districts from levying any new emergency levy, substitute levy, or combined school district income tax and property tax levy (**VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Eliminates school districts' authority to renew and increase an existing levy (**VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Eliminates political subdivisions' authority to levy replacement property tax levies (**VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Changes the term used in property tax ballot language and election notices to describe the true value of property from "the county auditor's appraised value" to "market value" (**VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Would have required that all current expense fixed-sum tax levies be included in the calculation of a school district's 20-mill floor or a joint vocational school district's 2-mill floor for property tax purposes (**VETOED**).
- Would have clarified the application of the 20-mill floor to additional floor millage (**VETOED**).
- Requires TAX to establish and implement a property tax relief screening system to evaluate the eligibility of property owners for the 2.5% rollback and homestead exemption.
- Requires TAX to notify county auditors of any improperly granted tax reductions discovered through the system.
- Requires a tax budget to include an estimate of expenses through the end of the fiscal year in which it is submitted.
- Requires a taxing unit that anticipates increased revenue collections on inside millage due to increased valuations or because of the 20-mill floor to state in its tax budget an intent to collect the increased revenue or forgo all or a portion of the increased revenue.
- Allows a taxing unit to request a lower rate on voted levies and provides that the request applies for only one year unless specifically stated otherwise.
- Would have prevented a school district from losing state funding if a declaration to forgo revenue results in a school district collecting less than 20 mills for current operating expenses (**VETOED**).
- Allows a school district to include its most recent projection of operating revenue and expenditures with its tax budget and requires the CBC that receives the projection to examine those projections when reviewing the tax budget.
- Requires a public body that levies property taxes and that does not currently submit information to a different body for inclusion in its tax budget to submit a tax budget to a CBC on its own.

- Requires each health district that does not file an estimate of contemplated revenue and expenditures with a taxing authority for inclusion in that taxing authority's tax budget to submit a tax budget on its own behalf.
- With respect to certain levies that a county budget commission is currently required to authorize without modification after confirming they are properly authorized:
  - Requires a CBC to determine the need for all amounts proposed to be raised from property taxes when reviewing tax budgets and other submitted information.
  - Would have allowed county budget commissions (CBCs) to reduce millage on any voter-approved tax levy after the first year of levy, and any debt levy no longer needed to pay an outstanding debt if the commission found it reasonably necessary or prudent to avoid unnecessary, excessive, or unneeded property tax collections (**VETOED**).
  - For such taxes levied by a body with a majority of members who are elected local officials, would have subjected any such reduction to two limitations:
    - CBCs could not reduce a levy such that it would collect less revenue than in the preceding year unless funds would be available from reserve balance accounts, nonexpendable trust funds, or carryover amounts to offset a reduction below that level.
    - CBCs could not reduce school district levies such that the school district would collect below the 20 mills in revenue, except as required to comply with the provision limiting accrual of general fund carry-overs (**VETOED**).
- Removes prohibitions on CBCs considering the status of reserve balance accounts or other certain unexpended funds when determining whether to reduce a political subdivision's taxing authority.
- Requires school districts to obtain approval from the CBC before adjusting inside millage in a manner that increases tax rates.
- Requires CBCs to offer, during at least one public meeting annually, testimony describing the concept and function of inside millage, how it is allocated to various jurisdictions in the county, and the fiscal impact of inside millage.
- Requires political subdivisions to disclose all funds in their control the inclusion of which is not already required by law for annual tax budgets.
- Places the burden of proof on a taxing unit to show the need for additional revenue when challenging any levy reductions made by the CBC before the Board of Tax Appeals (BTA).
- Would have required TAX to annually adjust the rate of a fixed-sum levy so that it would continue to raise the sum approved by voters and to certify that adjustment to county auditors (**VETOED**).
- Modifies the requirements governing when political subdivisions can file property tax complaints and countercomplaints.

- Authorizes the board of trustees of a state community college to levy a property tax for operating expenses, but only in the county in which its main campus is located.
- Requires revenue from the tax to be used to support college operations in that county.
- Requires that, if voters approve an operating levy, the board of trustees must charge a lower tuition rate to students who reside in the county in which the tax is levied.
- Allows counties to authorize property tax reductions that would piggy-back on the state's homestead exemption and 2.5% rollback for owner-occupied homes (**PARTIAL VETO OVERRIDDEN**).
- Expands a property tax exemption for buildings used as major league, or certain minor league, sports facilities to such facilities owned by, or on land owned by, a new community authority or an affiliated corporation.
- Expands a current property tax exemption for parking structures owned by certain local governments.
- Allows a subdivision to amend an existing community reinvestment area (CRA) agreement to extend the term of a CRA tax exemption to a total of 30 years for an existing building that is expected to be a megaproject or owned or occupied by a megaproject supplier.
- Allows a building to qualify for a longer than typical CRA tax exemption as part of a megaproject so long as it is owned or occupied, as opposed to owned and occupied, by a megaproject operator or supplier.
- Authorizes a manufactured home park operator to notify the county auditor that a manufactured home has been damaged or destroyed for the purpose of initiating a refund or waiver of taxes on the manufactured home.
- Permits a municipal corporation, township, and certain churches to temporarily apply for an abatement of delinquent property taxes on property owned by the applicant without regard to state law's payment limitations.

Local Government Fund

- Permanently increases, from 1.70% to 1.75%, the percentage of most state tax revenue that the Local Government Fund receives monthly.
- Terminates LGF reductions for townships and counties that have employed traffic cameras to issue citations.

Public Library Fund

- Discontinues dedicating a share of GRF tax revenue to the Public Library Fund, instead funding public libraries through a direct GRF appropriation.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Airport funding

- Creates the Ohio Airport Improvement Program Fund to be administered by the Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Aviation.

Regional transportation improvement projects (RTIP)

- Authorizes the expansion of the membership of an RTIP governing board to include the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the JobsOhio network partner that covers the majority of the area encompassed by the RTIP or the CEO's designee.

Ohio Maritime Assistance Program

- Expands the grant eligibility criteria under the Ohio Maritime Assistance Program.

Rail infrastructure funding

- Appropriates $6 million, from the Ohio Highway and Transportation Safety Fund, to fund short-line rail development infrastructure projects that enhance capacity and improve safety.

Route 23 and I-71 connector

- Modifies the requirement that ODOT and the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission create a joint plan regarding the feasibility of connecting U.S. Route 23 and I-71 that was enacted through H.B. 54 of the 136th General Assembly.

Drones for First Responders Pilot

- Requires the ODOT Director to establish a Drones for First Responders Pilot Program.
- Specifies the goals for the program, including acquisition of unmanned aerial vehicle systems (UAVS) for first responders, training on those systems, obtaining necessary federal approvals for beyond visual line of sight operations, and integrating state infrastructure.
- Conditions the purchase of any UAVS on their compliance with federal laws and regulations, including those involving national security and defense spending.

TREASURER OF STATE

Ideological investment decisions

- Prohibits investing public money with the primary purpose of influencing environmental, social, personal, or ideological policy, unless expressly authorized by Ohio law.

Investment of interim funds

- Allows the Treasurer of State (TOS), by rule, to reduce the amount of collateral a financial institution must pledge when holding public funds as investments in certificates of deposit, savings accounts, and deposit accounts by up to 10% as compared to current law.
- Reduces the rating in allowable debt interest investments, other than commercial paper, from the three highest categories by two nationally recognized statistical rating organizations to the four highest categories.
- Prohibits investments in debt interests rated in the fourth highest category from exceeding 10% of the state's portfolio.

Homeownership Savings Linked Deposit Program

- Requires the report on the Homeownership Savings Linked Deposit Program from the TOS to include the average premium savings rate paid on the accounts, rather than the average yield on the accounts.

ABLE accounts

- Exempts funds in an ABLE account from collection under the Ohio Medicaid Estate Recovery Program to the extent permitted under federal law.
- Requires the TOS to pay account fees associated with an ABLE account on behalf of an Ohio account owner or beneficiary.

Payment by check

- Permits the TOS to make a payment using a check.
- Defines a "check" as a negotiable financial instrument, payable upon demand, directing a financial institution to transfer money from the payer's account to the payee.

Investment in certificates of deposit (CDs)

- Repeals a law, which largely duplicates another, regarding investment of interim moneys in federally insured certificates of deposit (CDs).

Satellite offices

- Repeals authorization for TOS to open receiving offices for the payment of taxes and fees.

Crime Victims Recovery Fund

- Removes the responsibility of TOS to credit revenue to the Crime Victims Recovery Fund.

Assurance fund

- Eliminates the Torrens Law Assurance Fund and all related statutory content.

Technical correction

- Removes an outdated reference to inactive accounts regarding TOS's statement of balances upon the request of the Governor or OBM Director.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

- Replaces the Physician Recruitment Program with the Clinician Recruitment Program, expands program eligibility, revises the required contract terms, and permits the Director of Veterans Services to allocate funds.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Superintendent of the Ohio Veterans' Homes establish rules for the operation of the residents' benefit funds.
- Eliminates the Veteran Peer Counseling Network.
- Eliminates the Director's duty to keep a register of all claims filed by the Department.
- Requires the Director to survey potential sites in central Ohio for the construction of a new state veterans home.

OHIO VETERINARY MEDICAL LICENSING BOARD

- Generally allows a licensed veterinarian to conduct the practice of veterinary medicine via veterinary telehealth services with a client and the client's animal if:
  - The veterinarian obtains the informed consent from the client, including an acknowledgement that the standards of care prescribed by the law governing veterinarians equally apply to in-person and telehealth visits;
  - The veterinarian provides the client with the veterinarian's name and contact information and secures an alternate means of contacting the client if the telehealth visit is interrupted; and
  - Before conducting an evaluation of a patient via a telehealth visit, the veterinarian advises the client concerning certain information, including that the veterinarian may ultimately recommend an in-person visit.
- Specifies that, with respect to veterinary telehealth services, the practice of veterinary medicine occurs in the state in which the patient is located.
- Prohibits a licensed veterinarian whose client is engaged in raising livestock for human food products from using telehealth services for those livestock, unless the veterinarian has established a prior veterinary-client relationship in person with respect to those livestock.
- Allows a licensed veterinarian whose client is engaged in raising livestock for human food products to conduct tele-advice services prior to the veterinarian establishing a veterinary-client-relationship in person.
- Allows a licensed veterinarian to prescribe drugs or medications after establishing a veterinary-client-patient relationship via telehealth services with several provisos, including that the veterinarian may issue an initial prescription for up to 14 days and, after a subsequent telehealth visit, one refill for up to 14 days.
- Regarding establishing a veterinary-client-patient relationship and demonstrating knowledge of a patient to establish that relationship, adds to that the demonstration may include an examination of the patient in real time via telehealth services.

VISION PROFESSIONALS BOARD

- Eliminates an obsolete statutory provision relating to ocularist licensure.

DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES

- Would have required a convicted felon who is under 18 years old at the time a sentence is executed to be committed to the Department of Youth Services and assigned to an institution within the Department until the felon turns 18 or until other conditions are met (**VETOED**).

ELECTION LAW

Election Integrity Unit (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Creates the Election Integrity Unit in the office of the Secretary of State (SOS).
- Requires the Unit to investigate alleged violations of the Election Law upon receiving complaints from the public or on its own initiative.
- Allows the Unit to administer oaths, issue subpoenas, summon witnesses, compel the production of evidence, and hold hearings.
- Requires the Unit to submit annual reports of its activities to the Governor and the General Assembly.
- Requires prosecuting authorities, within one year of receiving a referral, to either prosecute the violation, request additional evidence from the Election Integrity Unit, or decline to prosecute via a written statement.
- Would have permitted the Election Integrity Unit to refer a case to the Attorney General (AG) if the prosecuting authority declines to prosecute the violation within one year (**VETOED**).
- If the prosecuting authority requests additional evidence from the Unit, requires the Unit to respond to the request within 90 days.
- If the Unit provides additional evidence, gives the prosecuting authority 180 days to prosecute or decline to prosecute via written statement; if the prosecuting authority does neither, permits the Unit to refer the case to the AG.

Ohio Election Integrity Commission

- Abolishes the Ohio Elections Commission (ELC) on January 1, 2026, and replaces it with the Ohio Election Integrity Commission (OEIC) in the Office of the Secretary of State (SOS).
- Requires the ELC to continue to operate under the current law between September 30, 2025, and January 1, 2026.
- Transfers any complaint that is still pending before the ELC on January 1 to the OEIC.
- Makes the OEIC the ELC's successor for all purposes.

Structure and organization

- Specifies that the OEIC consists of five members, with one appointed by each of the SOS, the Speaker of the House, the House Minority Leader, the Senate President, and the Senate Minority Leader.
- Requires that, in addition to meeting the current qualifications of ELC members, the members of the OEIC meet certain education or experience requirements.
- Requires members of the OEIC to serve four-year terms, with members limited to two successive terms.

- Compensates members of the OEIC at the rate of $25,000 per year plus reimbursement for expenses.
- Creates a process for the appointing authorities to remove a member of the OEIC for cause by filing a complaint with the Ohio Supreme Court.
- Transfers the ELC's current staff to the SOS and requires the SOS to provide staff to the OEIC, provided that the OEIC may request counsel from the Attorney General (AG).

Jurisdiction

- Gives the OEIC the same jurisdiction as the ELC, plus new jurisdiction over certain violations of the Election Law related to election petitions, voter registration, and voting.
- Clarifies that for enforcement purposes, the Campaign Finance Law includes the laws governing campaign practices by candidates for the governing boards of Ohio's five public employee retirement systems.

Advisory opinions

- Transfers the ELC's authority to render advisory opinions to the OEIC and makes the ELC's existing advisory opinions into OEIC opinions, unless and until the OEIC amends or rescinds them.

Complaint and hearing process

- Retains the current requirements for filing a complaint, but requires complaints to be filed with the SOS instead of the OEIC.
- Requires the SOS's Election Integrity Unit to review and investigate complaints.
- Requires the SOS to dismiss a complaint without further investigation if it fails to allege a violation over which the OEIC has jurisdiction or if the complainant lacks the required personal knowledge.
- Requires the SOS to review the Election Integrity Unit's report and recommendations and to either request a further investigation and a revised recommendation or to make a finding and, if applicable, impose a penalty or refer the matter for prosecution.
- Specifies that, if the subject of the complaint objects to the SOS's finding, the SOS instead must refer the matter to the OEIC for rehearing.
- Prescribes procedures to follow if the SOS has a conflict of interest regarding a complaint, requiring the AG to appoint an investigator and to determine how to dispose of the complaint.
- Requires the OEIC, when hearing an appeal, to appoint an attorney to conduct a hearing under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) and make a recommendation to the OEIC.
- Modifies the potential findings and penalties the SOS or the OEIC may impose.
- Requires the SOS to certify past due administrative fines to the AG for collection.

- Clarifies that the criminal penalty for any violation is the penalty that was in effect at the time the violation occurred.

Commission funding

- Replaces the Ohio Elections Commission Fund with the Ohio Election Integrity Fund administered by the SOS and gives it the same funding sources as the current ELC Fund.

Technical changes to Campaign Finance Law

- Makes several technical changes to sections of the Campaign Finance Law that are amended for other purposes.

School district board nominated by primary election (VETOED)

- Would have required candidates for the office of member of a school district board of education or of the governing board of an educational service center to be nominated by primary election or, in the case of an independent candidate, by nominating petition (**VETOED**).
- Would have required candidates for those offices to appear on the general election ballot with a political party designation along with other partisan offices (**VETOED**).

Board of Elections Fund

- Renames the Board of Elections Reimbursement and Education Fund to the Board of Elections Fund in the state treasury.
- Specifies that the Secretary of State can provide advancements, subject to recoupment, to boards of elections using money from the fund.

SPORTS FACILITIES AND UNCLAIMED FUNDS

Major sports facilities funding

- Authorizes $1 billion in unclaimed funds that have escheated to the state to pay for Ohio Sports and Cultural Facilities, with $600 million going to the costs of the Cleveland Browns major sports facility stadium project in the city of Brook Park, Ohio, in Cuyahoga County, and $400 million going to future projects.

Definitions

- Defines the following terms for the purpose of major sports facilities in Ohio:
  - "Major sports facility" means a stadium, arena, complex, or other facility that a governmental agency owns or has an ownership interest in, designed for the use of a professional sports franchise from certain major sports leagues.
  - "Transformational major sports facility mixed-use project" means a mixed-use project that includes the construction of a major sports facility, and integrates retail, residential, recreational, or other uses, the construction of which costs at least $1 billion.
  - "Transformational major sports facility mixed-use project district" means the geographic area encompassing the land upon which the transformational major sports facility mixed-use project is located.
  - "Base professional sports franchise state tax revenues" means an amount either set by the General Assembly, or equal to all state tax revenues generated pursuant to state income, sales, and CAT taxes that are attributable to the professional sports franchise's operations at existing facilities in Ohio, increasing by 3.5% every year.
  - "Total major sports facility mixed-use project district state tax revenues" means the total aggregate state tax revenue generated in the territory of a transformational major sports facility mixed-use project district.
  - "Incremental major sports facility mixed-use project district state tax revenues" means the amount of state tax revenues received by the state, subtracting base professional sports franchise state tax revenues from total major sports facility mixed-use project district state tax revenues in a calendar year.
  - "Owner" means a person that has a controlling interest in a professional sports franchise.

State funding of major sports facilities

- Permits state funds to be used to pay or reimburse up to 25% of the costs of a major sports facility if certain criteria are met, including a contribution of at least 50% of the costs from the professional sports franchise that plans to use the facility.
- Prohibits the state from incurring debt to pay for a major sports facility.

- Creates the Ohio Cultural and Sports Facility Performance Grant Fund, consisting of money appropriated to it, including escheated unclaimed funds, to be used to pay for major sports facilities.
- Requires the professional sports franchise to deposit an amount equal to 8⅓% of the award into an escrow account, and create a supplemental reserve of equal amount, to be used to pay any deficits between tax revenues collected and the total grant amount.
- Establishes a schedule under which increased tax revenues produced by the major sports facility over a 16-year period must meet target amounts, which increase every four years, the sum of which is equal to the grant amount.
- If the total incremental major sports facility tax revenues do not achieve target amounts every four years, requires the deficit to be offset with money from the escrow account, and if that is insufficient, the supplemental reserve, to be deposited in the GRF.
- Permits revenue in excess of target amounts to be applied towards future target amounts.
- Returns the escrow amount, plus interest it has accrued, to the professional sports franchise upon hitting all target amounts after 16 years, and permits the professional sports franchise to apply to receive its escrow money early if the total increased tax revenues have already equaled or exceeded the performance grant amount.
- Requires that, if the owner loses a controlling share of ownership or control interest in the professional sports franchise, the rights and obligations of the owner are assigned to, and assumed by, any new owner with controlling ownership interest.
- Prohibits the professional sports franchise from moving to a stadium outside of the district until the franchise hits the target amounts, or 30 years after its initial home game, whichever is earlier.

Tax reporting

- Requires every person who owns real property in a project district to comply with special tax reporting requirements, as required by the Department of Taxation (TAX).
- Requires persons that collect transformational major sports facility mixed-use project district tax revenues to report those tax revenues separately from other tax revenues in the state, on forms provided by TAX, including estimated payments on corporate income taxes and gross revenues generated from the district.
- Permits TAX, as well as municipal corporations, to disclose taxpayer information to the governmental agency that owns or has an ownership interest in the major sports facility.

Performance grants for sports and cultural facilities (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Appropriates $400 million from escheated unclaimed funds for performance grants for sports and cultural facilities.

- Creates a process by which organizations may apply to OBM for performance grants to pay up to 25% of the project cost of the construction or renovation of Ohio sports facilities and Ohio cultural facilities.
- Would have awarded only 15% for projects less than $500 million, and would have required sports facilities to have a minimum cost of $50 million ($5 million for cultural facilities) to be eligible for funding (**VETOED**).
- Requires the facility to be owned by the state or a governmental agency, a new community authority, or a nonprofit organization.
- Requires the applicant organization to provide a financial and development plan, which must demonstrate that the project will benefit the state in one or more specified ways.
- Permits OBM to enter into an agreement specifying the grant conditions, including provisions to recoup the grant through increased tax revenues or economic impact, and escrow payments.
- Requires the agreement to be approved by the Controlling Board.
- Subjects people producing tax revenue involved with the facility to reporting requirements as may be required by TAX, in consultation with OBM and FCC, for the purposes of the grant program.

Professional sports franchise moving facilities

- Permits an owner of a professional sports team using a tax-supported facility to move to a new facility if the new facility is located within Ohio.
- Maintains requirements for owners seeking to move a team to a facility located outside of Ohio.
- Requires a professional sports franchise owner desiring to move to a new facility, in lieu of an agreement permitting the owner to do so, to give six months' written notice to its host political subdivision, rather than just notice.
- Deems an expired lease or agreement as permission by a political subdivision for a team to move to a different facility located within Ohio.

Tourism attractions and professional sports facilities funding

Roadwork Development Fund

- Expands the purposes of the Roadwork Development Fund to include funding the following:
  - Construction, reconstruction, maintenance, or repair of public roads that provide or improve access to professional sports facilities;
  - Associated improvements necessary for access to tourism attractions and professional sports facilities; and

- Improvements associated with the retail and residential components that are a part of a tourism attraction or professional sports facility.

Facilities Establishment Fund

- Expands the purposes of the Facilities Establishment Fund to include funding persons that are engaged in developing tourism attractions and professional sports facilities.

Division of Unclaimed Funds

- Transfers ownership of unclaimed funds to the state if the funds are not claimed by the owner or another person that has a right to payment within ten years after the date the funds are first reported to the Department of Commerce (COM).
- Requires the COM Director, two times each year, to remit unclaimed funds and interest that escheat to the state to the Ohio Cultural and Sports Facility Performance Grant Fund (OCSFPGF).
- Specifies that all property rights, legal title to, and ownership of unclaimed funds and interest vest solely in the state on the date the funds escheat.
- Provides a ten-year grace period, ending January 1, 2036, during which former owners of unclaimed funds may file a claim and seek repayment after the funds escheat.
- Requires the COM Director to pay claims filed during the grace period from the Unclaimed Funds Trust Fund (UFTF) and not to seek reimbursement from the OCSFPGF or any other source.
- Requires private holders of unclaimed funds to return the funds to the COM Director when the funds escheat to the state.
- Requires the COM Director to develop guidelines and procedures for repayment of unclaimed funds and interest that are invested in nonliquid assets and to ensure that the balance of the UFTF is sufficient to meet the state's repayment obligations.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Abolition of commissions and committees

- Abolishes various commissions, committees, and a task force.
- Abolishes the Board of Directors of the Center for Community Health Worker Excellence and abolishes the statutory authority for the Center as a public-private partnership.

Governor's Advisory Board

- Specifies terms and chairpersons for the Advisory Board to the Governor's Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives.

MARCS Steering Committee

- Codifies the Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) Steering Committee in permanent law.

Automated Title Processing Board

- Beginning January 1, 2026, adds the President of the Ohio Automobile Dealers Association, or the President's representative, and an additional clerk of a court of common pleas to the Automated Title Processing Board.
- Removes the OBM Director as a nonvoting member Board.

Rail Development Commission

- Increases, from one to two, the number of members appointed to the Ohio Rail Development Commission by the Governor who represent the interest of freight rail companies.
- Specifies that one such member must represent a Class I railroad and the other member must represent a Class II or Class III railroad.
- Exempts those two members from the requirement that they be Ohio residents, provided they have a substantial connection to freight rail operations in Ohio.
- Removes the member appointed by the Governor who represents the interests of passenger rail service.

Other provisions

- Eliminates the requirement that the Director of Health, every two years, produce a report on rare diseases in Ohio.
- Modifies the General Assembly membership of the Student Tuition Recovery Authority.
- Removes the authority of the Speaker of the House to make a discretionary appointment to a Transportation Improvement District.

- Removes a residency requirement regarding members of the House and Senate who serve on the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission.
- Modifies the commencement schedule for the Sunset Review Committee.
- Modifies membership of the Emergency Response Commission.
- Eliminates a position on the Ohio Environmental Education Fund Advisory Council for a member of the Senate.
- Removes the representative of the JFS Bureau of Child Care from the Ohio Lead Advisory Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

County officials present in office

- Requires a county officer to appear at the officer's principal office location at least one day out of any 30-day period to satisfy the officer's duties.
- Decreases from 90 days to 30 days the time after which the office of county auditor or county treasurer becomes vacant if the auditor or treasurer fails to perform their duties.

County employee cash awards

- Limits the total amount of cash awards per county employee per calendar year to 10% of the employee's annual compensation, but permits the board of county commissioners to approve a higher amount.

County engineer

- Changes, from 100% to a range of 80-100%, the supplemental compensation amount a county engineer receives to perform the duties of county engineer in another county during a vacancy.

County sheriff

- Requires a county sheriff to provide a successor with a certificate of transition including an inventory of items and other information.

County budget commission membership

- Allows the county prosecutor to recuse herself or himself from the county budget commission and requires a county commissioner to serve instead.

County nonemergency patient transport

- Increases the population limit of a county at or under which a county may operate a nonemergency medical transport service organization.

Village dissolution

- Modifies the village dissolution process for small villages by eliminating the acreage maximum (previously two square miles) and increasing the population maximum from 150 to 500.
- Adds electric services to the list of services that may be counted when evaluating whether a village has provided the necessary number of services, and therefore, may not be subject to an automatic ballot question on village dissolution.

Local referenda

- For municipal corporations and limited home rule townships, increases the referendum signature requirement from 10% to 35%.

Local zoning

- For townships only, increases from 15% to 35% the number of signatures required on a referendum petition related to zoning amendments and exempts township zoning amendments related to megaprojects from the zoning referendum process.
- Requires a referendum petition for local zoning amendments about planned-unit development regulations to include 35% of electors in the area to which the proposed amendment would apply.

Local fiscal emergency receivership (PARTIALLY VETOED)

- Establishes a process for the creation of a receivership for counties, townships, and municipal corporations in fiscal emergency.
- Would have allowed the receiver to initiate bankruptcy proceedings unless the county, township, or municipal corporation adopted a sufficient plan to satisfy and discharge the debts and liabilities within seven years (**VETOED**).

Local option election for alcohol sales

- Requires a petitioner of a local option election for alcohol sales to pay the entire cost of an election if it is held on a day other than the day of a primary election, general election, or special election of a political subdivision for a question or issue, nomination for office, or election to office.

Political subdivision communications

- Prohibits chartered counties and municipal corporations from using public funds to finance certain communications and from paying their staff for time spent on certain political activities.

Cybersecurity program

- Requires political subdivisions to adopt a cybersecurity program.
- Prohibits a political subdivision experiencing a ransomware incident from paying or otherwise complying with a ransom demand unless the political subdivision's legislative authority formally approves the payment or compliance.

New community districts

- Modifies the criteria that determine the organizational board of commissioners of a new community district.
- Modifies the criteria for qualification as a proximate community and a developer under New Community Organization Law.

Eminent domain, recreational trails (VETOED)

- Would have established, with two exceptions, that the taking of property for recreational trails does not satisfy the public use requirement of Ohio's eminent domain law (**VETOED**).

Battery-charged fences

- Eliminates state law requirements concerning the installation and operation of battery-charged fences on private nonresidential property.
- Prohibits local governments from adopting or enforcing battery-charged fence regulations that expressly, implicitly, or functionally prohibit the installation, operation, or use of battery-charged fences that meet certain criteria.

Port authority common bond fund program

- Allows a port authority to establish a common bond fund program to finance port authority facilities and enhance the credit of port authority obligations using credit enhancement facilities, cash reserves, or other money available for that purpose.

Port authority construction agreements

- Prohibits a port authority from contracting with a nonpublic entity for construction or renovation of property outside its jurisdiction, such that construction materials for the project are exempt from sales tax without approval from the board of county commissioners in which the property is located when certain criteria are met.
- Provides that if the property is located in more than one county, the board of county commissioners of each county in which the property is located must approve the capital construction or renovation agreement.

Conservancy district maintenance assessments

- For purposes of the annual maintenance assessment levied by a conservancy district, eliminates the $2 minimum annual maintenance assessment on the total appraisal of benefits on a property.

LOW-INCOME UTILITY ASSISTANCE AND BLOCK GRANTS

Federal block grants

- Transfers powers and duties to administer Community Services Block Grant funds from the Department of Development (DEV) to the Department of Job and Family Services (JFS) while leaving the powers and duties unchanged.
- Aligns requirements for the General Assembly to hold public hearings regarding the Community Services Block Grant funds with federal law requirements.
- Transfers, from DEV to JFS, the requirement to submit a waiver to the federal government for use of federal low-income home energy assistance programs (HEAP) funds from the home energy assistance block grants for weatherization purposes.

Low-income customer assistance administration

- Transfers from the DEV Director to the JFS Director the administration of the low-income customer assistance programs, the consumer education program, and the energy efficiency and weatherization program.
- Requires the JFS Director to administer the low-income customer assistance programs beginning July 1, 2026.

Electric Partnership Plan Fund

- Replaces the Universal Service Fund with the Electric Partnership Plan (EPP) Fund to provide funding for the low-income customer assistance and consumer education programs.
- Requires the EPP fund to consist of (1) amounts allocated to each electric distribution utility (EDU) for consumer education programs and (2) any amount necessary to fund administrative costs of the low-income customer assistance programs.

Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) rider

- Beginning January 1, 2026, replaces the Universal Service rider with the PIPP rider on retail electric distribution rates as determined by the Public Utilities Commission (PUCO).
- Requires the PIPP rider to recover (1) the prudently incurred costs of providing the PIPP program for each EDU, (2) the EDUs' allocated shares for funding the low-income customer assistance programs administered by JFS, according to each EDU's annual distribution service revenues, and (3) any amount necessary to fund administrative costs of the low-income customer assistance programs.
- Requires each EDU's allocation to include a separately designated allocation equal to the EDU's share of the total amount for all EDUs not to exceed $15 million annually for funding the consumer education program.

- Requires each EDU, by June 30 each year, to remit to JFS the EDU's allocated share for the consumer education program and the administrative costs of the low-income customer assistance programs.
- Requires PUCO to administer the PIPP rider and perform periodic audits of each EDU's PIPP rider.
- Requires PUCO to adopt rules for the administration of the PIPP rider and to cooperate with, and provide assistance to, the JFS Director regarding low-income customer assistance program administration.
- Transfers from DEV to PUCO the requirement to establish a competitive procurement process for the supply of competitive retail electric service for PIPP program customers and to aggregate program customers for this purpose.

DEV to JFS transfer implementation

- Requires DEV to transfer the entirety of its responsibility of managing the following programs to JFS before July 1, 2027: (1) the low-income customer assistance programs, (2) the consumer education program, (3) the community services block grant, and (4) the EPP Fund.
- Requires any business commenced but not completed by July 1, 2027, within DEV that is planned to be transferred to be completed by JFS in the same manner and with the same effect as if completed by DEV.
- Includes various provisions to implement the transfer, such as requiring the creation of a detailed organizational plan, allowing the JFS Director and DEV Director to jointly or separately enter into staff training and development contracts, transferring employees and records, and requiring the continuation of rules relating to the transferred programs.

Public Benefits Advisory Board

- Replaces the DEV Director with the JFS Director on the Public Benefits Advisory Board.
- Limits the Board's duties to advising the JFS Director regarding the low-income customer assistance programs.
- Repeals the Board's duty to give advice regarding the Universal Service Fund and Rider and the Advanced Energy Program and Advanced Energy Fund and repeals its advisory powers and duties regarding economic development and stability, energy, and pollution matters in Ohio under the program.
- Eliminates reimbursements to Board members for expenses incurred for the Advanced Energy Program.

Advanced Energy Fund

- Repeals the following regarding Advanced Energy Fund revenue:

- The expired temporary Advanced Energy Rider collected by EDUs and their remittance to the Advanced Energy Fund;
- The ten-year limitation on remittance requirements for the temporary Advanced Energy Rider;
- The expired quarterly remittance and timing requirements for revenues from (1) payments, repayments, and collections under the Advanced Energy Program and from program income and (2) collections by an Ohio municipal electric utility or electric cooperative participating in the Advanced Energy Fund.

- Repeals the requirements regarding the use of money collected in rates, as of October 5, 1999, for non-low-income customer energy efficiency programs.

Obsolete reports

- Repeals requirements for reports having due dates that have passed.

PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

Department of Agriculture laboratories

- Excludes information, reports, and other records used in any Department of Agriculture (ODA) laboratory to perform a laboratory service from the Public Records Law.
- Requires any details that would identify a particular person or entity that submitted a specimen to any ODA laboratory to be treated as confidential unless the ODA Director shares the information with a government agency for use in the discharge of the agency's official public duties or an institution of higher education.
- Allows the ODA Director to prepare and publish statistical information without disclosing details that would identify a particular person or business client.

Inmate records

- Restates that records pertaining to inmates committed to the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and persons under Adult Parole Authority supervision are not public records, unless specifically exempted.

License plate recognition systems

- Exempts images and data captured by an automated license plate recognition system that are maintained in a law enforcement database from the Public Records Law.

Work products

- Modifies the definition of specific investigatory work product that is protected from public records request disclosure and specifies the duration for which specific investigatory work product records are exempt from disclosure.
- Creates an exemption from the Public Records Law for attorney work product records.

Trial preparation records

- Clarifies the duration for which trial preparation records are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Law.
- Specifies that a trial preparation record is any record that is not a confidential law enforcement investigatory record or attorney work product record.

Personal notes and assistive devices, applications

- Exempts from the definition of "record" the personal notes or any document device or item, regardless of physical form or whether an assistive device or application was used, of a public official or, the public official's attorney, employee, or agent.

Elected officials' public calendars

- Exempts entries for future dates on an elected official's public calendar from disclosure as a public record.

Legislative documents

- Creates a limited exemption from the Public Records Law for documents prepared by General Assembly members or General Assembly staff for other General Assembly members or staff.
- Exempts those documents from disclosure until the General Assembly in which they were created adjourns *sine die,* unless the documents would be privileged under the "speech or debate" clause of the Ohio Constitution.

Video public records

- Authorizes a prosecuting attorney's office to assess certain charges for preparing a video public record.
- Prohibits a state or local law enforcement agency or a prosecuting attorney's office from charging a victim a fee for a video public record.

ABLE account records

- Exempts from Public Records Law any record of the Treasurer of State indicating ABLE account beneficiaries, balances, and activity on ABLE accounts.

Procurement records

- Clarifies that all documents related to a competitive selection (including competitive sealed bidding, competitive sealed proposals, reverse auctions, and electronic procurement) are not public records until after the contract has been awarded.
- Eliminates law that specified the documents are public records after a competitive selection is canceled.

MISCELLANEOUS

Public official compensation

- Increases and extends pay raises for justices and judges, county officials, township officials, and members of county boards of elections, from 1.75% per year through 2028 under current law to 5% per year through 2029.

State security employees

- Permits the General Assembly and Executive Department officers to establish, implement, and fund through public resources, security provisions for the protection of the General Assembly members and Executive Department officers.
- Permits each house of the General Assembly, in addition to the Sergeant-at-arms and any assistant Sergeants-at-arms, to appoint, employ, contract with, and fix the compensation of law enforcement officers or other persons to provide or coordinate security for the General Assembly members.
- Permits each Executive Department officer to appoint, employ, contract with, and fix the compensation of law enforcement officers or other persons to provide or coordinate security for the officer.
- Specifies that those law enforcement officers appointed have the same arrest powers as other peace officers and law enforcement officers to apprehend offenders.
- States that the jurisdiction of the security is concurrent with peace officers and law enforcement officers of the relevant county, township, or municipal corporation and with the State Highway Patrol.
- Specifies that the Supreme Court has the authority to adopt rules to establish, implement, and fund through public resources, security provisions for the protection of justices, judges, and the judiciary.

Agency notices

- Requires state agencies to inform the Speaker of the House and the Senate President about federal funding reduction notices.
- Requires state agencies to inform the Speaker of the House and the Senate President about federal noncompliance notices.

Occupational licensing boards

- Requires the standing committees that biennially review occupational licensing boards per state law to consider whether the number of board members is appropriate based on the board's workload and the number of licenses the board issues.
- Requires the standing committees to attempt to ensure that each board it reviews consists of not fewer than five members and not more than nine members.

Terms of library trustees

- Reduces from seven to four years the terms of office of board of trustee members of a school district free public library, county library district, or regional library district appointed after September 30, 2025 (the act's effective date).

Library materials (VETOED)

- Would have required a public library to place material related to sexual orientation or gender identity or expression in a portion of the library that is not primarily open to the view of a person under 18 years old (**VETOED**).

Sex recognition

- Establishes state policy recognizing only two sexes, male and female, which are not changeable and are grounded in fundamental and incontrovertible reality.

Menstrual products in public buildings

- Prohibits a government entity from placing menstrual products in the men's restroom of a public building.

Unlawfully extracting or exploiting minerals of another

- Establishes mechanisms for the determination of damages that result from a person trespassing on the land of another and unlawfully extracting or exploiting minerals.

Public employee leave to serve as election official

- Corrects erroneous cross references in statute governing paid leave for state and local public employees who volunteer as precinct election officials.

H.B. 184

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Stewart and T. Mathews

Effective date: March 20, 2026; appropriations effective December 19, 2025

Contracts with intercollegiate athletes

- Prohibits any person from entering into a name, image, or likeness (NIL) contract with an intercollegiate athlete if the contract remains in effect or requires the athlete to provide future compensation or rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.
- With respect to any litigation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution process arising from an NIL contract, does both of the following:
  - Prohibits the contract from requiring the process to take place in another state; and
  - Requires the process to take place in Ohio and be governed by Ohio law.

- Requires the parties to any NIL contract involving an intercollegiate athlete who transfers to an Ohio institution from another state to ensure that the contract continues at the new institution.
- Prohibits an athlete agent from entering into a fee agreement that requires an athlete to provide future compensation or rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.
- Prohibits an athlete agent from entering into an agent contract under which the athlete agent represents an athlete in relation to contracts or legal matters regarding opportunities to earn compensation for use of the athlete's NIL if the agent contract remains in effect after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.
- Specifies that NIL includes "personal services."
- Applies the act's provisions to contracts and agreements entered into on or after March 20, 2026, the act's effective date.

Nursing facility quality incentive payments

- For purposes of determining the total amount spent on Medicaid quality incentive payments in a year for nursing facilities, specifies that the calculation utilizes 60% of the per diem amount a nursing facility's *cost per case-mix unit* changed as a result of rebasing, instead of 60% of the per diem amount the facility's *rate for direct care costs* changed.
- Clarifies that for purposes of this calculation, a nursing facility's cost per case-mix unit is determined under continuing law and must not be multiplied by the facility's semiannual case-mix score.
- Declares the General Assembly's intent in making the above changes.

Primary and secondary education

School district administrative expenses cap

- Excludes educational service center (ESC) governing boards from the prohibition on any school district board of education spending more than 15% of its annual operating budget on administrative expenses.

Student transportation

- Permits the ESC serving the Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Pilot Program to transport a student to and from that student's workplace learning experiences.
- Beginning July 1, 2026, authorizes a school district located in certain counties with a local mass transit system to arrange for student transportation services for the district's students in 9th through 12th grade via the mass transit system.
- Requires any school district that arranges for the mass transit student transportation described above to ensure both of the following:

- The students are assigned to a route that does not require them to make more than one transfer; and
- That any transfer does not occur at the mass transit system's central transfer hub.

Science of Reading implementation report

- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to annually issue a report about the implementation of the Science of Reading law in public schools.

School emergency management plans

- Corrects the school emergency management plan law so that the licensing body of a preschool or school-age childcare program is the Department of Children and Youth.

Higher education

- Requires each state institution of higher education to submit any inspection report of its existing facilities to the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Department of Administrative Services.
- Requires the Department of Administrative Services to post on its website a copy of each inspection report and a cost estimate of any required remediation.
- Clarifies that the accelerated 90-hour degree programs that each state university must establish are 90 *semester credit* hour degree programs.
- Updates the time admitted to the practice of law in Ohio from less than eight years to less than 12 years for an applicant to participate in the Rural Practice Incentive Program.

Percent for Arts Program

- Establishes a maximum upper limit of $200,000 for funds that a state agency must spend on artwork under the Percent for Arts Program.

Temporary property tax abatements

- Permits Franklin County or certain local governments in Franklin County, during a temporary period, to apply to abate delinquent property taxes on a multi-level parking garage owned or leased by the applicant without regard to continuing law's prohibition on property tax exemption for tax delinquent property.

Historic rehabilitation tax credits – rescinded awards

- Allows a project that was awarded a historic rehabilitation tax credit with an increased credit amount during a prior period, if the award was subsequently rescinded, to again benefit from the increased credit on a new award even though that increased credit amount is no longer available generally.

Tax increment financing extensions

- Authorizes a local government, under certain circumstances, to extend the term of a tax increment financing exemption for up to 30 additional years.

Public Records Law exemptions

- Exempts from the Public Records Law certain information submitted to a political subdivision for economic development assistance purposes.
- Specifies that information gained as a result of returns, investigations, hearings, or verifications required or authorized under Municipal Income Tax Law is not a public record under the Public Records Law.

Surety liability for Brent Spence Bridge projects

- Limits the liability of a surety on a contract performance bond to 115% of the value of the bond, with respect to additional costs reasonably incurred by the Director of Transportation (ODOT Director) for completion of a project, if all the following apply:
  - The contract relates to a major bridge project over the Ohio River (i.e., the Brent Spence Bridge project);
  - The surety made a written offer to the ODOT Director within ten days of the contractor defaulting on the contract to complete the work covered by the contract; and
  - The surety failed or refused to complete the work covered by the contract.

Department of Public Safety

Accessible parking placard

- Removes the fee associated with obtaining a duplicate removable windshield placard when the original is lost, destroyed, or mutilated.

Commercial driver's licenses for noncitizens

- Requires a commercial driver's license that is issued to a legally present noncitizen of the U.S. to include a prominent statement with the words "Non-Domiciled Commercial Driver's License" printed on the license.

Driver's license fees for disabled veterans

- Expands which disabled veterans are exempt from paying driver's license-related fees by exempting a veteran who has a service-connected disability that is compensated at 100% by the U.S. Veterans Administration in the same manner as if the veteran has a disability rating of 100%.

Driver's education and supervised driving requirements

- Exempts the following limited term license applicants from the associated driver's education and supervised driving requirements:
  - An applicant who holds a valid, unexpired visa and a valid, unexpired foreign driver's license who presents a form attesting to the applicant's relationship with a hospital or health system; and
  - An applicant who holds a valid, unexpired H-2A visa (temporary agricultural worker) and presents a form attesting to the applicant's employment by an Ohio farm.

- Expands who qualifies as an eligible adult to supervise the actual driving experience of an emancipated adult to include any person 21 or older who holds a valid Ohio driver's license or commercial driver's license.

Attorney unclaimed funds

- Exempts attorney unclaimed funds reported on or before January 1, 2026, from escheating to the state.
- Permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation to cover attorney unclaimed funds that escheat to the state.
- Appropriates to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation $19,500 in FY 2026 and $90,500 in FY 2027 and transfers $110,000 from GRF to the newly created Access to Justice Unclaimed Funds Fund.

Private insurance outreach program

- Repeals duplicative language requiring the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), during FY 2027, to create and administer an outreach program to provide information, awareness, and assistance to Medicaid recipients to help them transition from Medicaid to private insurance.

Publicly funded child care payments

- Extends to July 9, 2028 (from July 5, 2026), the date by which the Department of Children and Youth is required to calculate publicly funded child care payments based on a child's enrollment with a child care provider rather than on the child's attendance.

Early Childhood Education Grant Program

- Specifies that a grant awarded under the Department of Children and Youth's Early Childhood Education Grant Program is not publicly funded child care or a family services program.

Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund

- Transfers responsibility for the Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund from the OBM Director to the Director of Public Safety.
- Specifies, for purposes of coverage under the fund, that the phrase "public safety officer" includes peace officers, firefighters, and state-certified emergency medical workers, whether paid or volunteer.
- Requires the OBM Director to transfer $40 million cash from the GRF to the fund in FY 2027.

Other appropriations

- Makes other appropriations.

H.B. 434

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Willis and Lampton

Effective date: Emergency: November 25, 2025; amendment to R.C. 2303.201, regarding special projects fees collected by courts of common pleas, effective March 30, 2026

Budget corrections

Limited term license: education requirements

- Exempts certain military-related limited term license applicants from the driver's education requirements.

TMUD tax credit transfers

- Modifies the procedure for transferring a transformational mixed-use development (TMUD) tax credit.

Water pipe grants

- Removes from the Workforce Housing Project Grant Program the grant metric that favored polyvinyl chloride water pipe over ductile iron.

OBM authority to award funds for cultural facilities

- Removes the authority of the Office of Budget and Management to award funds (made up of unclaimed funds that have escheated to the state) to organizations to construct or renovate Ohio cultural facilities.

Targeted Addiction Assistance Fund

- Clarifies that, beginning January 15, 2027, funds from any case brought or joined by the Attorney General to recompense for damages to the state by the opioid crisis must be remitted for deposit into the Targeted Addiction Assistance Fund.

Local option homestead exemption

- Modifies the eligibility requirements of a local option homestead exemption to align with the state homestead exemption.

Court special projects fund

- Permits fees collected by a municipal, county, common pleas, or appeals court for special projects of the court to be used for training or education that takes place anywhere within the continental U.S., rather than just within Ohio.

Law enforcement tows (VETOED)

- Would have required the payment of towing and storage fees for vehicles ordered towed by law enforcement in all circumstances with no exceptions (**VETOED**).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program error rate

- Requires the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to establish a methodology and technical system to determine payment error rates within the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Requires ODJFS to consult specified stakeholders in establishing the system and to consult the chairpersons of the House and Senate Finance committees prior to implementation.
- Requires ODJFS to provide quarterly updates regarding SNAP payment error rates.

Corrective Medicaid change

- Removes a reference to the former Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee.

Property tax abatement

- Permits a charitable organization to temporarily apply for an abatement of delinquent property taxes on conservation and preservation property owned by the applicant without regard to continuing law's payment limitations.

Corrective income tax changes

- Corrects two referencing errors in the Income Tax Law.

Disadvantaged pupil impact aid

- Redefines a "newly opened community school" for disadvantaged pupil impact aid calculations in FYs 2026 and 2027 as a community school that was not open in FY 2025.
- Prohibits the calculated average daily membership (ADM) of economically disadvantaged students for school districts, JVSDs, STEM schools, and community schools that are not newly opened community schools for FYs 2026 and 2027 from exceeding the school's enrolled ADM for that fiscal year.

Drones for First Responders Program

- Expands the Drones for First Responders Program, enacted in H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly, to apply to first responders in counties and townships.

Appropriations

- Makes various appropriations for FYs 2026 and 2027.