

# DIGEST OF ENACTMENTS 2024

135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2023-2024)

Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Columbus, Ohio

March 2025



# INTRODUCTION

The *Digest of Enactments 2024* summarizes legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2024. During Regular Session, the General Assembly enacted 59 House bills and 34 Senate bills, plus H.J.R. 8. In Special Session, the General Assembly enacted two House bills. Governor Mike DeWine partially vetoed one item in S.B. 54, and vetoed one item in S.B. 144 and three items in H.B. 315.

In January 2024, the General Assembly overrode the Governor’s 2023 veto of H.B. 68 and one item veto in H.B. 33, the main operating budget act. The overridden vetoes are addressed in the [Digest of Enactments 2023 \(PDF\)](#), which is available on the Legislative Service Commission’s (LSC’s) website: [lsc.ohio.gov](http://lsc.ohio.gov).

The summaries in this publication are condensed versions of the final analyses prepared by LSC for the General Assembly. The *Digest* does not purport to represent the details of each enactment. Readers may obtain a full LSC final analysis by conducting a keyword search for the act number on the home page of the General Assembly’s website, [legislature.ohio.gov](http://legislature.ohio.gov). Readers also may obtain a copy of the act from among those documents. Readers may obtain a scanned copy of the signed act by selecting “[Bill Effective Dates](#)” under the link “[Legislation & Ballot Issues](#)” on the Ohio Secretary of State’s website, [ohiosos.gov](http://ohiosos.gov).

The legislative history of each act is available on the General Assembly’s website, by selecting the “Status” link on the act’s summary page, or by selecting “[Status Reports](#)” under the “Legislation” link. Status Reports are available as PDF reports and Excel spreadsheets.

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# Agriculture

## H.B. 364

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Dobos and Klopfenstein

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Exempts certain noncommercial seed sharing activities from the laws governing seed labeling, permitting, inspection, advertising, and sales reporting.
- Aligns the list of weeds that must be removed from a toll road, railroad, or electric railway to the list of noxious weeds that must be removed from other roads and road rights-of-way, removing such weeds as milkweed, common thistle, wild lettuce, wild mustard, ragweed, and ironweed.

## H.B. 503

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Peterson and Jones

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Department of Natural Resources: wild boar and feral swine**

- Adds prohibitions to the wildlife law related to wild boar and feral swine, including prohibitions against:
  - Knowingly importing, transporting, or possessing live wild boar or feral swine;
  - Knowingly releasing wild boar or feral swine into the wild or expanding the range of a wild boar or feral swine by introducing it to a new location; and
  - Purposely feeding a wild boar or feral swine.
- Requires a person who knows or has reason to know that wild boar or feral swine are present on public or private property to report that fact to the Division of Wildlife.
- Eliminates wild boar as a game animal, but establishes a process by which a person or the person's agent may immediately eradicate wild boar and feral swine on the person's property without a hunting license if the person or the person's agent notifies the Division and follows Division instructions.

### **Department of Agriculture: feeding swine**

- Eliminates the required annual license to feed treated garbage to swine and, instead, prohibits feeding any garbage to swine, including treated garbage.
- Prohibits a person from bringing into Ohio a swine that has been fed garbage or treated garbage.

- Authorizes the Director of Agriculture to investigate violations of the above prohibitions and to make inquiries into any alleged violation as are necessary to secure compliance with the law governing garbage-fed swine and orders issued under it.
- Allows the Director to assess a civil penalty against a person who violates the act's prohibitions regarding garbage-fed swine, as follows:
  - For a first violation, up to \$500;
  - For each subsequent violation, up to \$1,000.

### **Agricultural commodity handlers**

- For purposes of the definition of “storage” in the Agricultural Commodity Handlers Law, retains the definition, but states that it includes unapplied and hold grain tickets.
- Defines “grain bank” for purposes of the Agricultural Commodity Handlers Law in addition to defining it for purposes of agricultural commodity transactions as under continuing law.
- Includes a definition of “regular price bid” for purposes of the Agricultural Commodity Handlers Law, but does not use the term in that law.
- Defines “regular price bid” as the current basis bid or cash price of an agricultural commodity handler licensed under that law.

# Appropriations

## H.B. 2

(For details of the act’s fiscal provisions, see the [LSC Final Capital Item Analysis \(PDF\)](#), which is available on LSC’s website, [lsc.ohio.gov](http://lsc.ohio.gov), under “Budget Central,” and the [LSC Final Fiscal Note \(PDF\)](#), which is available on the General Assembly’s website, [legislature.ohio.gov](http://legislature.ohio.gov).)

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Cutrona and Upchurch

**Effective date:** Emergency: June 28, 2024

### Appropriations

- Appropriates \$717 million to the Office of Budget and Management to fund projects from the One Time Strategic Community Investments Fund.
- Makes capital appropriations totaling \$3.51 billion for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium, and authorizes about \$2.93 billion in new debt.
- Makes capital reappropriations totaling \$1.98 billion for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium.

### Public Works Commission

- Revises several provisions of the Public Works Commission (PWC) Law, including:
  - Sets a defined distribution percentage for allocating district public works integrating committees funds to political subdivisions under the State Capital Improvement Program, rather than a graduated percentage depending on the funding year;
  - Eliminates a requirement that the PWC Director encourage the development of multidistrict projects by district public works integrating committees; and
  - Eliminates a requirement that the PWC Director establish policies related to the need for long-term control through a lease of real property that is the subject of a Clean Ohio natural resource-related grant application.

### State employee pay

- Authorizes the Director of Administrative Services to temporarily modify pay ranges to achieve pay parity between state employees who are not subject to collective bargaining and those paid in accordance with a collective bargaining agreement that is effective on or after March 1, 2024.
- Limits any modification to the pay period that includes July 1, 2024, through the pay period that includes June 30, 2025.
- Requires the DAS Director to report any modification to the Controlling Board.

## S.B. 54

(For details of the act's fiscal provisions, see the [LSC Final Fiscal Note \(PDF\)](#), which is available on the General Assembly's website, [legislature.ohio.gov](http://legislature.ohio.gov).)

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Reynolds and Sykes

**Effective date:** Operating appropriations effective January 2, 2025; all other provisions effective April 3, 2025; one item partially vetoed

- Makes various operating appropriations for FY 2025 and capital appropriations for the FY 2025-FY 2026 biennium.
- Would have required the Secretary of State to wait until after the May 2025 primary election to reimburse county boards of elections for costs related to that election (VETOED).
- Expands eligibility for sports site selection grants.
- Creates the Ohio River Commission and the Ohio Ireland Trade Commission.



# Commerce

## H.B. 184

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Brennan and Bird

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Applies the Ohio Charitable Solicitation Law to operators of receptacles used to collect donations of clothing, books, and certain personal items, household items, or other goods.
- Requires the operator of a collection receptacle to display a conspicuous and permanent sign or label on every side of the receptacle providing identifying and contact information for the charitable organization and, if applicable, the professional solicitor.
- Requires a professional solicitor to pay a \$200 fee to the Attorney General at the commencement of a solicitation campaign.
- Allows the Attorney General to publish certain information collected from a professional solicitor at the outset of a solicitation campaign.
- Requires the solicitation notice filed by a professional solicitor at the commencement of a solicitation campaign to include the location of any collection receptacle to be used as part of the campaign.
- Limits the duration of solicitation campaigns conducted by professional solicitors to four years.
- Requires professional solicitors to periodically report the total weight of items collected in collection receptacles and the value received for the items' sale.
- Permits the contract between a professional solicitor and a charitable organization to express the benefit the organization will receive based on an amount of dollars per pound of goods collected rather than as a percentage of gross revenue.
- Requires a professional solicitor to make and maintain audio recordings of each telephone solicitation the solicitor makes.
- Prohibits a charitable solicitation or charitable sales promotion from initiating an outbound telephone call that delivers a prerecorded message in violation of the federal Telemarketing Sales Rule.
- Permits the Attorney General to examine a professional solicitor's pitch sheets, solicitation scripts, and recordings when investigating any alleged violation of the Ohio Charitable Solicitation Law.

## H.B. 301

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Swearingen

**Effective Date:** October 24, 2024

### **Nonprofit corporation changes**

- Requires nonprofit corporation directors to be natural persons (i.e., individuals rather than business entities).
- Authorizes a committee consisting of one or more directors of a nonprofit corporation to create a subcommittee, unless otherwise provided in the articles, regulations, or resolution of the original committee.
- Specifies the fiduciary duty required of an officer of a nonprofit corporation.
- Expands the circumstances in which provisional directors may be appointed.
- Revises the standards for determining liability of directors when nonprofit corporations make loans and the interest rate relating to that liability.
- Establishes that a loan made in violation of the law governing nonprofit corporations does not affect the borrower's liability on the loan.
- Authorizes a majority of the incorporators of a nonprofit corporation to amend the articles of incorporation when (1) the articles do not name initial directors, (2) a meeting of voting members has not yet occurred, and (3) the incorporators have not yet elected directors.
- Establishes that a certificate issued by the Secretary of State confirming that a nonprofit corporation is in good standing is conclusive evidence of certain facts.
- Limits the liability of those who provide goods to, or perform services for, nonprofit corporations or their members to only the person or entity to whom the goods or services were provided.
- Permits religious organizations to opt into the Unincorporated Nonprofit Association Law.
- Allows a dissolving corporation to provide certain tax-related information as an alternative to securing a certificate from the Department of Taxation confirming that all state taxes have been paid.

### **Final appealable orders**

- Classifies the following as a final order that may be reviewed on appeal: an order that restrains or restricts enforcement of a state statute or regulation, whether on a temporary, preliminary, or permanent basis, in whole or in part, facially or as applied.

### **Conciliation for custody disputes between unmarried parents**

- Allows a court to order unmarried parents who are in a custody dispute to undergo conciliation with a magistrate.

- Requires a magistrate to resolve disputes through conciliation procedures and, upon resolution, to issue an order regarding the allocation of parental rights and responsibilities, parenting time, or companionship or visitation.
- Specifies that conciliation procedures may include use of family counselors and service agencies, community health services, physicians, licensed psychologists, and clergy.

### **Ashtabula County courts**

- Replaces the two part-time judgeships of the Ashtabula County County Court with one full-time judge and provides that the part-time judgeships cease on January 1, 2031.
- Provides that the part-time judge of the Ashtabula County County Court to be elected in 2028 must be elected for a two-year term commencing January 1, 2029, and ending December 31, 2030, and that one full-time judge must be elected in 2030 for a six-year term to commence January 1, 2031.
- Beginning January 1, 2025, expands the territorial jurisdiction of the Conneaut Municipal Court to include the municipal corporation of North Kingsville, and Kingsville, Monroe, and Sheffield townships, in Ashtabula County.
- Requires that all cases arising in North Kingsville and in Kingsville, Monroe, and Sheffield townships that are pending in the Eastern County Court in Ashtabula County on January 1, 2025, be adjudicated by the Ashtabula County County Court.
- Requires that all cases arising in North Kingsville and in Kingsville, Monroe, and Sheffield townships on or after January 1, 2025, be brought before the Conneaut Municipal Court.

### **Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission**

- Requires the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission to re-establish a standing juvenile committee.
- Re-establishes requirements for the Commission to review and develop a juvenile justice policy for the state, as well as assisting policymakers with legislation related to juvenile justice issues.

### **Political subdivision soldiers' memorial**

- Expands the authority of a board of trustees of a political subdivision soldiers' memorial.

### **Public depositories**

- Eliminates the prohibition against financial institutions that are subject to a cease-and-desist order from serving as a public depository.
- Requires public depositories to notify the governing board if the depository becomes party to an active prompt corrective action directive.
- Specifies that institutions are ineligible to serve as public depositories while under a prompt corrective action directive unless authorized by a governing board.

- Relieves certain public officials from liability for loss of public moneys deposited in a failed public depository.

## **Cemeteries**

- Modifies the laws governing the repair or replacement of a mausoleum or columbarium.
- Allows the disinterment of the cremated remains of a decedent who died of a contagious or infectious disease, without a permit issued by the local board of health.

## **Judicial release and transitional control**

- Reiterates that amendments to the judicial release and transitional control processes made in S.B. 288 of the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly apply only to prisoners serving prison terms on or after April 4, 2023, the effective date of S.B. 288.

# **S.B. 98**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Rulli

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

## **Fraudulent business filings**

- Prohibits filings under the Commercial Transactions Law or the Corporations and Partnerships Law that include the name or address of another person without their consent or that are submitted by a person that lacks authority to make the filing (i.e., “fraudulent filings”).
- Authorizes any person who believes the person has been impacted by a fraudulent filing to file a complaint with the Secretary of State (SOS).
- Requires the SOS to review each complaint and allows the SOS to forward any likely violations to a county prosecutor for criminal investigation.
- Requires the SOS, upon determining that a complaint indicates a likely violation and meets the act’s content-related requirements, to send a notice and demand to the alleged fraudulent filer.
- Requires a person that receives a notice and demand to respond to the allegations within 21 days.
- Requires the SOS to cancel or invalidate filings that are determined to be fraudulent or unauthorized.
- Allows aggrieved parties to appeal the SOS’s determinations or actions under the Administrative Procedure Act.

## **Statutory agents**

- Requires a statutory agent appointment to include the address of the agent’s primary residence or usual place of business in Ohio.

- Specifies that a post office box does not qualify as a valid address for a statutory agent.

## **Reinstating business entities**

- Limits the period in which corporations, associations, and limited liability companies can be reinstated to two years from the date on which the entity was abolished.

## **Solicitations related to public records**

- Requires a person, who is not a government entity, that solicits a filing or copy retrieval fee for a public record to include certain disclosures with the solicitation.

## **Property tax exemptions and abatements**

- Extends an exemption available to political subdivisions and charitable and educational institutions that use or lease property exclusively for charitable, educational, or public purposes to religious institutions and for the purpose of public worship.
- Modifies an exemption for a convention center owned by the largest city in a county with a population of between 235,000 and 300,000, i.e., the City of Mason in Warren County.
- Provides a temporary period for a county, metropolitan park district, municipality, or community improvement corporation to apply for an exemption from property taxation and abatement of unpaid taxes, penalties, and interest on certain property.

## **Fire investigator firearms training**

- Permits fire investigators to attend approved peace officer training schools to receive firearms training that would qualify them to carry firearms while on duty.
- Requires the Attorney General to adopt rules governing the training.
- Permits fire investigators to carry firearms on duty if both of the following apply:
  - They are authorized to do so by their superiors;
  - They either (1) have received a certificate from the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission certifying satisfactory completion of basic training, or (2) before or during employment as a fire investigator, and before October 24, 2024, successfully completed another firearms training program approved by the Commission.
- Protects a fire investigator who is authorized to carry firearms from potential civil or criminal liability for any conduct that occurs while carrying firearms to the same extent as law enforcement.
- Adds fire investigators to persons required to complete a firearms requalification program.
- Provides that a fire investigator who is qualified to carry firearms while on duty has the same right to carry a concealed handgun in Ohio as a person who was issued a concealed handgun license.

## **Reimbursement deadline**

- Creates a one-year deadline for counties to submit reimbursement requests to the state for the per diem compensation paid to acting/assigned county or municipal court judges.

## **Motor vehicle inspections**

- Adds a clerk of a court of common pleas to the entities that, under certain circumstances, are authorized to conduct a physical inspection of a motor vehicle, off-highway motorcycle, or all-purpose vehicle when the owner applies for an Ohio certificate of title.
- Authorizes the clerk to collect a \$5 service fee for the physical inspection.

## **Numbering of state ballot issues**

- Requires that, beginning with the general election on November 5, 2024, a state issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated as Issue 1 and any state issue placed below that must be consecutively numbered.
- Requires that, for elections after November 5, 2024, a state issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated by the next number after the number of the last state issue, instead of starting over at Issue 1.
- Requires that the numbers reset to state issue 1 after state Issue 500 appears on the ballot.

## **Equestrian event facilities**

- Exempts an equestrian event facility from recreational vehicle park and camp operation license requirements under specified circumstances.



# Constitutional Amendments

## H.J.R. 8

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Oelslager and Troy

**Adopted:** December 18, 2024; to be submitted to the voters on May 6, 2025

- Proposes a constitutional amendment to extend the State Capital Improvement Program with the issuance of an additional \$2.5 billion of general obligation bonds to fund local infrastructure capital improvements.

# Courts

## H.B. 34

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Klopfenstein and King

**Effective date:** July 23, 2024

- Expands the circumstances in which a prospective juror can be excused from jury service to include the prospective juror being a mother who is breast-feeding her baby, and the baby is one year of age or younger.
- Provides that a signed affidavit provided to the judge and stating that a prospective juror is a mother who is breast-feeding her baby is satisfactory documentation to support the request to be excused from jury service.

## H.B. 179

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Mathews and Stewart

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

### Tolling of limitations period

- Provides that the tolling of the limitations period during the defendant's absence or concealment does not apply to statutes of repose.
- Declares that the General Assembly's purpose is to expressly overrule the decision of the Ohio Supreme Court in the case of *Elliot v. Durrani*.

### Vicarious liability

- Provides that if tort liability arises against both a principal and agent, master and servant, employer and employee, or other persons having a vicarious liability relationship, the injured party may sue either the primarily liable agent, servant, employee, or person or the secondarily liable principal, master, employer, or person, or both.
- Stipulates that for the injured party to prevail in a tort action alleging vicarious liability against a secondarily liable person, both of the following apply:
  - A primarily liable person committed the tortious act in the course of, and within the scope of, that person's agency or servant relationship with, or employment by, the secondarily liable person.
  - A primarily liable person is not a necessary party to the tort action alleging vicarious liability against a secondarily liable person, with certain exceptions.
- Provides that for a principal, master, or employer to be found liable for the tortious act, an agent, servant, or employee must have committed the tortious act in the course of, or

within the scope of, the agent's, servant's, or employee's agency or servant relationship with, or employment by, the principal, master, or employer.

## **H.B. 338**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. White and Sweeney

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Court child support orders for a child with a disability**

- Clarifies that a child support order may continue beyond the age of majority for a person with a disability.
- Defines “person with a disability” as a person with a mental or physical disability, whose disability began before the person reached the age of majority, and whose disability makes the person incapable of supporting or maintaining oneself.
- Allows a court to issue or modify a child support order for the care of a child who is a person with a disability as part of a marriage termination proceeding or when issuing or modifying a court-issued child support order, regardless of whether the child is over or under the age of majority.
- Allows a court to terminate a child support order for a person with a disability upon satisfactory proof that the person is no longer mentally or physically disabled or is capable of supporting or maintaining oneself.
- Updates the definition of “court child support order” to include any order for child support issued for a child who is a person with a disability.
- Specifies that nothing in the Revised Code allows a child support enforcement agency (CSEA) to issue an administrative child support order for a person over the age of 18, including a person with a disability, and instead allows the CSEA to file an action in court for the support of a person with a disability.

### **Lebanon Municipal Court**

- Converts the part-time judge of the Lebanon Municipal Court to a full-time judge beginning March 20, 2025 (the act's effective date), until December 31, 2027, when the current part-time judge's term expires.

### **Court computerization fees**

- Allows an elected clerk of a county court to determine that additional funds are required to computerize the office of the clerk and retains the court's authority to do so when the clerk is appointed.
- Clarifies that an elected clerk of a municipal or county court may disburse computerization funds subject to an appropriation by the commissioners, while in a court with an appointed clerk, the court may issue an order to disburse the funds subject to an appropriation by the commissioners.

- Specifies that in a court of common pleas where the clerk is appointed, the court may authorize and disburse computerization funds, instead of the county executive.

## **S.B. 63**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Lang

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Requires a plaintiff in a tort action alleging an asbestos claim to provide all parties a sworn statement of specified disclosures within 60 days of filing the complaint.
- Requires the plaintiff to continue to supplement the information that the plaintiff is required to disclose.
- Requires dismissal of an asbestos claim if the defendant's asbestos-containing product or site is not identified in the plaintiff's sworn statement, or the plaintiff fails to comply with the requirements for filing the sworn statement, unless the plaintiff shows good cause.
- Specifies that the act does not apply to a claim for workers' compensation or a claim for veterans' benefits.

## **S.B. 158**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Cirino

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Creates a new judgeship of the Adams County Common Pleas Court, to be elected in 2026, for a six-year term beginning February 9, 2027.
- Beginning February 9, 2029, designates the judge as the judge of the Adams County Common Pleas Court, Probate and Juvenile Division, with the powers relating to juvenile courts and probate courts.

## **S.B. 237**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Gavarone and Manning

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Uniform Public Expression Protection Act**

- Names the chapter enacted by the act the "Uniform Public Expression Protection Act."
- States that the new chapter is intended to confer substantive immunity from suit, and not merely immunity from liability, for any cause of action concerning protected speech under it.
- Specifies the types of civil actions to which the chapter applies.
- Exempts certain actions and claims from the chapter's provisions.

- Stipulates that the chapter creates no new statutory causes of action.
- Establishes procedures for a motion for expedited relief from a civil action type specified in the chapter.
- Requires a stay of proceedings in the action prior to a ruling on the motion for expedited relief, other than for a motion for attorney's fees, court costs, and other litigation expenses.
- Permits a court, upon request, to stay a hearing or motion involving another party in the action, if the hearing or ruling on the motion for expedited relief would adjudicate an issue material to the issue of the hearing or the motion.
- Specifies that the court will consider the pleadings, the motion, any response to the motion, and any evidence that could be considered in ruling on a motion for summary judgment under Civil Rule 56 of the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure in ruling on the motion for expedited relief.
- Specifies on what grounds the court will dismiss a cause of action, or part of a cause of action, with prejudice.
- Permits a court to allow discovery during a stay if the party seeking discovery shows that specific information is necessary to establish whether a party has satisfied a burden to prove that the party's cause of action should not be dismissed.
- Permits a court to hear and rule on a motion unrelated to the motion for expedited relief or a motion seeking a temporary or preliminary injunction to protect against an imminent threat to public health or safety during the stay for a motion for expedited relief.
- Specifies that an order denying a motion for expedited relief is a final appealable order.
- Establishes the burden of costs for a prevailing party on a successful motion for expedited relief, or for frivolous conduct if the motion is denied.
- Provides that the court must not fail to award, or reduce an award of, attorney's fees, court costs, and other reasonable litigation expenses on the grounds that the representation of the moving party was undertaken on a pro bono or contingent basis.
- Requires the court to broadly construe and apply the act's provisions and to consider the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to its subject matter among states that enact a substantially similar law.

### **Small claims court jurisdiction**

- Provides that the filing or defense of an action by the holder of a security agreement or retail installment contract, purchased by the holder for the holder's portfolio of investments, was not and is not prohibited in the small claims division of a municipal or county court, provided that the holder is not an assignee for the purpose of collection.

**Eviction actions**

- Prohibits any person from filing a forcible entry and detainer action listing a minor tenant as a defendant if a parent or adult guardian is also listed as a defendant on the same complaint.
- Requires the court to dismiss without prejudice any action filed in violation of the prohibition and order the person that filed the action to pay the minor tenant's reasonable attorneys' fees.



# Crimes, Corrections, and Law Enforcement

## H.B. 29

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Humphrey and Brewer

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### Driver's license suspensions

#### Drug offenses

- Removes the possible penalty of a driver's license suspension for a drug abuse offense, unless the offender used a vehicle to further the commission of the offense or the offense occurs under the same circumstances as an OVI-offense.

#### Failure to pay a court fine or appear

- Eliminates the immediate driver's license suspension for failure to pay a court fine or fee.
- Eliminates the option of submitting a valid and unexpired driver's license, in lieu of bail or another form of security, as a guarantee that the licensee will appear in court.
- Specifies that a person can enter into a payment plan with the clerk of court in order to avoid an arrest warrant for failure to appear or failure to pay a fine.
- Makes it permissive, rather than mandatory as under prior law, for a court to issue a supplemental citation to a person who fails to appear in court, and delays issuance of a summons or arrest warrant for failure to appear until 30 days after the supplemental citation is issued.
- Authorizes the supplemental citation to be sent through electronic means to the offender.
- Requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to automatically remove any driver's license suspensions or motor vehicle registration suspensions imposed by the Registrar for failure to pay a court fine or fee, and to create a list of individuals whose license was suspended by a court for that offense and send it to those courts.
- Requires those courts to lift any driver's license suspensions previously imposed for failure to pay a court fine or fee.
- Prohibits the Registrar from charging any reinstatement fees for reinstatement of a driver's license or motor vehicle registration associated with those lifted suspensions.

#### Failure to pay child support

- Authorizes a person who is in default on child support payments to present evidence that a driver's license suspension would effectively prevent that person from paying child support or the arrearage due.

- Authorizes the child support enforcement agency to consider that evidence in determining whether to notify the Registrar to terminate a driver's license suspension on the person in default.
- Delays the implementation of a driver's license suspension on a person who is in default on child support payments for 30 days after the child support enforcement agency sends notice to the person.
- Authorizes a person whose driver's license is suspended for failure to pay child support to file a motion with the court for limited driving privileges in all circumstances, not just when the motion is made during contempt proceedings.

### **Truancy**

- Removes an administrative driver's license suspension or a denial of the opportunity to obtain a driver's license as possible penalties for a student who is habitually truant from school.
- Authorizes a student whose license currently is suspended or who currently is denied the opportunity to obtain a license because of habitual truancy to apply to have the suspension or denial removed.

### **Proof of financial responsibility penalties**

- Regarding increased penalties for multiple offenses of operating a motor vehicle without proof of financial responsibility, reduces the lookback period from five years to one year.
- Eliminates the suspension of motor vehicle registration rights and impoundment of a vehicle's certificate of registration and license plates as penalties for operating a motor vehicle without proof of financial responsibility, but retains a driver's license suspension as a penalty.
- Eliminates the \$50 financial responsibility noncompliance fee when a person fails to voluntarily surrender the person's license, certificate of registration, or license plates.
- Increases from 15 days to 45 days the grace period, starting when the Registrar mails notification of the pending suspension order, during which a person may present the Registrar proof of financial responsibility in order to avoid a driver's license suspension.
- Reduces the time from either three or five years down to one year that a person whose license was suspended for failure to provide proof of financial responsibility must continually file such proof after the offense (a.k.a., an SR-22 form).
- Eliminates the additional criminal penalties and license suspension imposed on a person who operates a motor vehicle without proof of financial responsibility while the person is within the SR-22 form filing period.

## **Random Verification Program**

- Requires the Registrar to remove any remaining driver's license suspensions associated with the Financial Responsibility Random Verification Program, which was repealed in 2019.
- Prohibits the Registrar from charging any reinstatement fees for reinstating a driver's license associated with the program.

## **Stopping for on-track equipment at railroad crossing**

- Requires a vehicle operator to stop for on-track equipment that may be approaching a railroad crossing.
- Requires school vehicle operators, hazardous materials transporters, and certain construction equipment operators to stop, watch, and listen for on-track equipment that may be approaching a railroad crossing in the same manner as for trains.
- Applies preexisting penalties to the requirements specified above.
- Authorizes a court to order an offender to successfully complete a remedial safety training or presentation regarding rail safety in lieu of a fine or jail term for failing to stop appropriately at a railroad crossing.

## **H.B. 37**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Johnson and K. Miller

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

## **Aggravated vehicular homicide penalties**

- Establishes a new, tiered-system, based on the number of prior offenses and the nature of the offense, to trigger increased minimum mandatory prison terms for aggravated vehicular homicide that is the proximate result of operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, a drug of abuse, or a combination of them (OVI) offense.
- Increases the possible financial penalties for aggravated vehicular homicide committed as the proximate result of an OVI offense by raising the maximum fine to \$25,000.

## **Oral fluid testing**

- Authorizes law enforcement to collect an oral fluid sample from a person arrested for OVI.
- Authorizes the testing of that oral fluid sample for the presence of a drug of abuse or a metabolite of a drug of abuse.
- Authorizes the oral fluid sample and its test results to be used as evidence related to OVI charges.

- Stipulates that any person who operates a vehicle or who is in physical control of a vehicle has given consent to have that person’s oral fluid collected and tested if arrested for OVI (“implied consent”).
- Makes conforming changes to the laws governing OVI while operating a watercraft or a commercial motor vehicle and the release of drug test records in criminal cases.

## **OVI penalties**

- Increases the minimum criminal fines for OVI by an additional \$190, while lowering the related driver’s license reinstatement fees by \$160, resulting in a net increase of \$30 in OVI minimum financial penalties.
- Modifies when a court must condition the granting of limited driving privileges to an OVI offender on the use of an ignition interlock device.

## **H.B. 56**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Plummer and White

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

## **Fleeing law enforcement**

- Increases the penalty for willfully eluding or fleeing a police officer using a motor vehicle from a first degree misdemeanor to a fourth degree felony.
- Increases the penalty from a fourth degree felony to a third degree felony if the flight is immediately after the commission of a felony.
- Increases the possible prison term for circumstances when the flight:
  - Was the proximate cause of serious physical harm to persons or property; or
  - Caused a substantial risk of serious physical harm to persons or property.

## **Policy for pursuit**

- Requires a law enforcement entity, when adopting a policy for pursuing criminal offenders in a motor vehicle, to consider pursuit policy standards and best-practice recommendations from the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board or a similar accrediting entity and to train its peace officers on the policy.

## **Stunt driving and street takeover**

- Prohibits any person from knowingly participating in stunt driving (i.e., burnouts, doughnuts, drifting wheelies, or allowing passengers to ride partially or fully outside the vehicle) on any public road, street, or highway, or private property open to the general public.
- Prohibits a person from knowingly participating in a street takeover (i.e., blocking or impeding the regular flow of vehicle or pedestrian traffic for the purpose of street racing

or stunt driving) on any public road, street, highway, or private property that is open to the general public.

- Makes the two new criminal offenses first degree misdemeanors, with a possible driver's license suspension of 30 days to three years, and requires the assessment of six points on the offender's driver's license.
- Requires that anyone rendering assistance to stunt driving or street takeover be charged the same as the participants.
- Prohibits street racing on private property open to the public and applies the continuing law penalties for street racing on public roads, streets, and highways to the offense.
- Exempts competitive operation of vehicles on public or private property from the above prohibitions when either the political subdivision with jurisdiction of the location or the property owner knowingly allows it at that location.

### **Vehicular homicide and assault**

- Adds utility vehicles and mini-trucks to the list of vehicles that can be used to commit a vehicular homicide or assault offense.
- Corrects a reference pertaining to consecutive prison terms for certain license suspension and OVI offenses committed in conjunction with involuntary manslaughter.

### **Third-party driver's exam administrators**

- Clarifies who may be a third-party administrator for the standard motor vehicle skills test, which includes a clerk of the court of common pleas.
- Requires any fees collected by a clerk of the court of common pleas serving as a third-party administrator to be deposited into the Certificate of Title Administration Fund.
- Requires fees collected by clerks serving as third-party administrators between April 12, 2021, and October 24, 2024 (the act's effective date), be deposited into that fund.

### **Indigent Defense Support Fund**

- Restores prior law that allocated increased amounts of the reinstatement fee associated with failure to maintain proof of financial responsibility to the Indigent Defense Support Fund.

## **H.B. 111**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. LaRe and K. Miller

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Creates a presumption for a prison term for third degree felony domestic violence.
- Increases the sentencing range for third degree felony domestic violence.

## **H.B. 161**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Miranda and Hillyer

**Effective date:** August 9, 2024

- Eliminates exceptions to rape, sexual battery, and other sex offenses that formerly applied if the victim was the spouse of the offender.
- Expands the proceedings in which a person may testify against the person's spouse to include prosecutions for the sex offenses modified by the act.

## **H.B. 234**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Williams and Rogers, Jr.

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Alford pleas**

- Prohibits a court, when determining an appropriate sentence when an offender enters an Alford plea, from considering whether an offender showed genuine remorse for an offense.

### **Sealing and expungement**

- Allows for multiple third degree felonies to be treated as a single conviction for purposes of sealing and expungement under certain circumstances.
- Eliminates eligibility for sealing or expungement of a conviction for theft in office.
- Allows an offender to seal, but not expunge, a conviction record for third degree misdemeanor domestic violence or a conviction record for violating a protection order.

### **Suspension of local officials charged with felony**

- Renames the defined term "prosecuting attorney" to "prosecuting officer" and expands the term to include the Attorney General and special prosecutors.
- Permits federal prosecutors to serve as prosecuting officers at the federal prosecutor's own volition.
- Specifies timelines under this provision.
- Changes the recipient of certain documents and notices from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to the Clerk of the Supreme Court.

## **H.B. 289**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Robb Blasdel and Swearingen

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Registration of a residence address**

- Requires that an offender or delinquent child who is required to register under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORN) Law to include in their registration a current fixed address.
- Requires the offender or delinquent child, if the residence address is not to a fixed residence address, to include in the registration a detailed description of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the following 30 days.
- Modifies the definition of “fixed residence address.”

### **Notice of intent to reside**

- Requires that the offender or delinquent child include in their notice of intent to reside the fixed residence address at which the offender or delinquent child intends to reside.
- Requires the offender or delinquent child, if the residence address change is not to a fixed address, to include in the notice a detailed description of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the following 30 days.

### **Change of address notification**

- Requires the offender or delinquent child to provide written notice of a change of address at least 20 days prior to changing the residence address.
- Requires the offender or delinquent child, if the residence address is not to a fixed residence address, to include in that notice a detailed description of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the next 30 days.
- Requires that until the offender or delinquent child has a fixed residence address, every 30 days the offender or delinquent child must include in that notice a detailed description of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the following 30 days.

### **Registration of new address**

- Requires the offender or delinquent child who is required to provide written notice of a change of address to also register the new address.
- Requires the offender or delinquent child, if the residence address change is not to a fixed residence address, to include in the registration a detailed description of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the next 30 days.
- Requires that until the offender or delinquent child has a fixed residence address, every 30 days the offender or delinquent child must include in that notice a detailed description

of the place or places at which the offender or delinquent child intends to stay for the following 30 days.

### **Penalty**

- Applies continuing law penalties for failure to register to a residence address, failure to send notice of intent to residence, failure to notify a sheriff of a change of address, and failure to register a new residence address.

### **Tolling time offender has to comply**

- Provides that if an offender or delinquent child is required to register as a Tier I or Tier II Sex Offender/Child-Victim Offender and the person fails to comply with the SORN Law, the period of time that the person has a duty to comply with the law is tolled for the amount of time the person is in violation of the Law.
- Specifies that the period of time the offender or delinquent child has a duty to comply with the SORN law resumes once the person is no longer in violation of the law.

### **Notice of sex offender release in another county**

- Requires the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to notify a county sheriff as soon as is practicable when a person who is required to register as a sex offender will be transported to that county by the Department under qualifying circumstances.

### **Intervention in lieu of conviction**

- Extends until October 15, 2025, the availability of community-based correctional facility placement as a term of intervention in lieu of conviction.

### **Criminal defendant subpoena**

- Repeals procedures for a defendant subpoenaing a victim's records.

## **H.B. 322**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Seitz and Abrams

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Child sexual abuse registry**

- Changes the penalty for a registrant of the Child Sexual Abuse Registry who fails to comply with registration, notice, and verification requirements from a fifth degree felony to a civil penalty of up to \$2,500.
- Requires the sheriff, if a registrant fails to comply with verification requirements, to promptly refer the failure to the prosecuting attorney of the county in which the registrant is required to verify their current address or the county in which the registrant resides or is employed.



- Allows the prosecuting attorney to file a civil action against the registrant, but if the prosecuting attorney does not file the civil action within 45 days after the referral, the aggrieved person may file the civil action.
- Repeals the prohibition on a registrant of the Child Sexual Abuse Registry establishing a residence or occupying a residential premises within 1,000 feet of any school premises.

### **Limitation period for reporting child abuse or neglect**

- Expands the period of limitation for prosecuting a failure to report child abuse or neglect by specified persons from two years to four years after the offense is committed.

### **Grooming**

- Creates the offense of grooming, a first or second degree misdemeanor, except under specified circumstances in which the offense is a felony.

## **H.B. 366**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Ghanbari

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **FORCE Act**

- Names the act the Fight Organized Retail Crime and Empower Law Enforcement (FORCE) Act.

### **Organized Retail Theft Task Force**

- Establishes the Organized Retail Theft Task Force within the Organized Crime Investigations Commission to investigate retail theft activity, including cargo theft, and any complaint received involving retail theft.
- Requires the Organized Crime Investigation Commission to appoint a director and specified members of the Organized Retail Theft Task Force.
- Increases the fee for a sales tax vendor license from \$25 to \$50, and directs that the additional money be used by the Commission exclusively to support the operations of the Task Force.

### **Advisory Council**

- Creates the Organized Retail Theft Advisory Council within the Attorney General's office.
- Requires the Advisory Council to advise the Organized Crime Investigations Commission on organized retail theft and recommend actions for the commission to detect, deter, prevent, and prosecute organized retail theft.

### **Theft**

- Specifies that an offender is guilty of grand theft, a fourth degree felony, if the offender is guilty of a felony theft offense within the previous three years.

- Specifies that an offender is guilty of aggravated theft, a third degree felony, if the offender two or more times is guilty of a felony theft offense within the previous three years.
- Specifies that an offender is guilty of theft from a person in a protected class, a fourth degree felony, if the offender is guilty of a felony theft offense within the previous three years, and a third degree felony if the offender two or more times is guilty of a felony theft offense within the previous three years.

### **Theft of mail**

- Creates the offense of theft of mail, which is generally a fifth degree felony, but can escalate as high as a first degree felony depending on the value of the mail stolen and other specified circumstances.

### **Organized theft of retail property**

- Creates the offense of organized theft of retail property and specifies that organized theft of retail property is generally a third degree felony, but can escalate as high as a first degree felony depending on the value of the retail property stolen and other specified circumstances.
- Provides that when determining whether the retail value of retail property equals or exceeds \$1,000, the value of all retail property stolen from the retail establishments by the same person or persons within any six-month period will be aggregated.
- Provides that a prosecution for a violation of organized theft of retail property does not preclude a prosecution for theft, receiving stolen property, criminal simulation, or engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity related to organized retail theft based on the same conduct.
- Provides that if an offender is guilty of organized theft of retail property and is also guilty of theft, receiving stolen property, criminal simulation, or engaging in a pattern of corrupt activity related to organized retail theft based on the same conduct, the two or more offenses will be considered as allied offenses of similar import.

### **Counterfeiting**

- Expands the offense of counterfeiting to also prohibit certain acts involving debit, credit, or gift cards.

### **Corrupt activity**

- Provides that if a pattern of corrupt activity involves one or more incidents of organized retail theft, certain entities whose retail property was allegedly stolen may contact the prosecuting attorney and request that the charge be aggregated with other known thefts of retail property.

## Securities Law

- Revises a provision of the Ohio Securities Law that allows a corporation to recover profit derived from the sale of securities by a person who proposes to, or publicly discloses the intention of, acquiring control of a corporation.
- Limits application of that remedy to situations in which the person selling the securities engages in “manipulative practices,” by staging a hostile takeover bid to manipulate a corporation or committing any other act that the Ohio Division of Securities defines as manipulative.

## H.B. 531

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Lear and Lorenz

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

## Braden’s Law

- Names the parts of the act described under “Sexual extortion” and “Custodian compliance” Braden’s Law.

## Sexual extortion

- Creates the offense of sexual extortion, a first, second, or third degree felony depending on the circumstances of the offense.

## Exceptions

- Provides that a person cannot commit sexual extortion solely by providing access to an electronic method of remotely transferring information not under the person’s control that does not include the creation of the content of the material that is the subject of the access or connection.
- Provides that any person providing access or connection to or from an electronic method of remotely transferring information not under the person’s control is not liable for any action taken in good faith to block the receipt or transmission of any information sent that is or could be considered as sexual extortion.
- Provides that there is no affirmative duty for any person providing access to an electronic method of remotely transferring information not under the person’s control to block the receipt or transmission of possible instances of sexual extortion.
- Provides that a person cannot be convicted of an offense, and a child cannot be adjudicated a delinquent child, for disseminating private images of that person or child to another person as a result of committing the crime of sexual extortion when the person or child is a victim.

## Civil and criminal actions and immunity

- Prohibits a person from asserting a cause of action in any Ohio court against any provider of an information, interactive computer, or telecommunications service for any injury,

death, or loss to person or property in accordance with a court order issued in relation to sexual extortion.

- Provides that a provider of an information, interactive computer, or telecommunications service is immune from civil or criminal liability for injury, death, or loss to person or property in accordance with a court order issued in relation to sexual extortion.
- Provides that a user or provider of an interactive computer service cannot be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider and will not be held civilly or criminally liable for the information provided by the other content provider.
- Provides that a person who develops or creates any content that is considered to be sexual extortion is not protected and is liable for committing the offense.

### **Custodian compliance**

- Requires a court, within 30 days, to adjudicate an application for a court order requiring a custodian to disclose the digital assets or terminate the account of a deceased user who was younger than 18.
- Requires the court to impose a civil penalty on the custodian if the custodian fails to comply with the court order.

### **Felony sentencing factors**

- Adds the following factors a court must consider when imposing a felony sentence, that indicate that the offender's conduct is more serious than conduct normally constituting the offense:
  - The victim of the offense suffered serious physical, psychological, or economic harm, including serious physical harm the victim caused to the victim's self, as a result of the offense.
  - The victim died by suicide as a result of the offense.

### **Electronic search warrants**

- Requires a provider of an electronic communication service or of a remote computing service operating in Ohio to comply with any court-issued search warrant or interception warrant, regardless of whether user data is held at a location within Ohio or at a location in another state.
- Permits a court to issue an order on a service provider that is a corporation or entity that is incorporated or organized in Ohio, or a company or business entity doing business in Ohio under a contract or terms of a service agreement with an Ohio resident.

## **S.B. 100**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Manning and Antonio

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Illegal use of a tracking device or application**

- Prohibits a person from knowingly installing a tracking device or tracking application on another person's property without the other person's consent.
- Specifies that the offense of "illegal use of a tracking device or application," is generally a first degree misdemeanor.
- Specifies that illegal use of a tracking device or application is a fourth degree felony in listed circumstances, including a prior conviction of that offense or of menacing by stalking, the offender was the subject of a protection order, or a prior history of violence toward the victim.
- Specifies circumstances in which previously granted consent to the installation of a tracking device or application is presumed to be revoked and situations that are exempt from the prohibition.

### **Penalties for selling tobacco products to underage persons**

- Specifies fines for repeated violations of the prohibitions against selling tobacco products to underage persons and selling tobacco products without checking the consumer's identification.
- Expands the definition of "public nuisance" to include places or businesses that repeatedly violate the prohibitions against selling tobacco products to underage persons or selling them without checking the consumer's identification.

### **Oral fluid testing**

- Authorizes law enforcement to collect an oral fluid sample from a person arrested for operating a vehicle under the influence (OVI).
- Authorizes the testing of that oral fluid sample for the presence of a drug of abuse or a metabolite of a drug of abuse.
- Authorizes the oral fluid sample and its test results to be used as evidence related to charges that a person operated a vehicle while "under the influence of alcohol, a drug of abuse, or a combination of them" (the general OVI prohibition).
- Specifies that any person who operates a vehicle or who is in physical control of a vehicle has given consent to have that person's oral fluid collected and tested if arrested for OVI ("implied consent").
- Makes conforming changes to the laws governing OVI while operating a watercraft or a commercial motor vehicle and the release of drug test records in criminal cases.

## S.B. 109

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Hackett

**Effective date:** March 21, 2025; conforming amendments effective October 12, 2028

### Sex offenses

- Expands the offense of sexual battery by prohibiting the following:
  - Engaging in “sexual activity” (“sexual contact” or “sexual conduct,” as defined in continuing law) rather than just sexual conduct, under specified circumstances;
  - Causing another to engage in sexual activity with the offender; or causing two or more other persons to engage in sexual activity, under specified circumstances;
  - Adding to those specified circumstances that the offender is a licensed medical professional, the other person, or one of the other persons, is a patient of the offender, and the sexual activity occurs in the course of medical treatment.
- If the sexual battery offender is a licensed medical professional, requires the following:
  - The prosecuting attorney handling the case to send written notice of the indictment or charge to the regulatory board or agency with administrative authority to suspend or revoke the medical professional’s professional license, certification, registration, or authorization;
  - The court, upon conviction of the offender, to transmit a certified copy of the judgment entry of conviction to the regulatory board or agency.
- Modifies the offense of sexual imposition by repealing most of the circumstances under which sexual imposition is committed and including those circumstances in committing the expanded offense of sexual battery.
- Expands the circumstances under which rape is committed by providing that the offender knows that the other person’s judgment or control is substantially impaired as a result of the influence of any drug administered to the other person with consent for the purpose of medical or dental examination, treatment, or surgery.
- Classifies an offender under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification (SORN) Law if convicted of the expanded sexual battery as follows:
  - If the sexual activity involved is sexual contact, as a Tier II sex offender/child-victim offender who must verify registration information every 180 days after the initial registration date, for 25 years for an adult offender or for 20 years for a juvenile offender;
  - If the sexual activity involved is sexual conduct, as a Tier III sex offender/child-victim offender who must verify registration information every 90 days after the initial registration date, for life.

- For any offense for which sentence is being imposed, requires the court to impose a term of life imprisonment without parole if the offender previously has been convicted of the expanded offense of sexual battery and the sexual activity involved is sexual conduct, and also of a sexually violent predator specification.
- By reason of the act's expansion of the offenses of sexual battery and rape, makes conforming changes in the laws pertaining to:
  - Childhood sexual abuse;
  - Children conceived as a result of rape or sexual battery;
  - Consent to adoption not required;
  - Declaration of paternity;
  - Standing to bring paternity action.

### **Failure to report a crime**

- Expands the offense of failure to report a crime by prohibiting any person who knows that a licensed medical professional has committed a sex offense against a patient from failing to report that knowledge to law enforcement authorities within 30 days of obtaining the knowledge.
- Grants civil or criminal immunity generally to a person as a result of making the report so long as the person is acting in good faith without fraud or malice.
- Provides that the physician-patient relationship or physician assistant-patient relationship is not a ground for excluding evidence against the medical professional in any judicial proceeding resulting from a report regarding the person's knowledge of, or reasonable cause to suspect, the medical professional's commission of a sex offense.

### **Notice of conviction sent to licensing board**

- Requires the prosecutor to notify the State Medical Board of the conviction of, or plea of guilty to, a felony or specified type of misdemeanor of any persons licensed or authorized to practice as dietitians, anesthesiology assistants, respiratory care professionals, acupuncturists, radiology assistants, and genetic counselors.

### **Public Records Law**

- Excludes from the definition of "public records" the license or certificate application or renewal responses and supporting documentation submitted to the State Medical Board regarding an applicant's, or a licensee's, inability to practice according to acceptable and prevailing standards of care due to a medical condition.

### **Medical Board regulation of health professionals**

- Authorizes the Medical Board to recommend a license be suspended without a prior hearing if it receives verifiable information that a licensee has been charged with a felony and the conduct constitutes a disciplinary violation under Ohio law.

- Adds circumstances under which a licensee is subject to an automatic license suspension, including regarding human trafficking and if a license to practice a health profession in another state is suspended or revoked.
- Shortens from 60 days to 30 days the time in which health care facilities, licensees, and professional associations must report various conduct to the Board.
- Requires health care facilities to report to the Board investigations regarding criminal conduct or sexual misconduct against licensees.
- Requires licensees and certain professional associations that have reasonable cause to suspect that a licensee has committed or participated in criminal conduct or sexual misconduct to report that information to the Board.
- Requires Board licensees to report criminal charges regarding criminal conduct, sexual misconduct, or any conduct involving the use of a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Authorizes the Board to require licensees subject to probationary orders related to sexual misconduct or patient harm to provide a written disclosure to each patient, or the patient's guardian or a key third party.
- Makes other changes regarding Board disciplinary investigations, confidentiality, and case reporting.

## **Unauthorized intimate examinations**

- Prohibits registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses, physician assistants, physicians, medical residents, or students from performing an intimate examination on an anesthetized or unconscious patient except under limited circumstances.
- Authorizes the appropriate licensing board to take disciplinary action if the provider violates the prohibition on intimate examinations, such as when an intimate examination is within the scope of care for the procedure or examination being performed.

## **S.B. 214**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Kunze

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Allows a victim of human trafficking to apply to expunge records of conviction for a misdemeanor, fourth degree felony, or fifth degree felony.
- Requires the applicant to demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant's participation in the offense was the result of the applicant having been a victim of human trafficking.



## Education

### **H.B. 8**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Swearingen and Carruthers

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

#### **Parents' Bill of Rights**

- Requires public schools to adopt a policy by July 1, 2025, that promotes parental involvement in the public school system and establishes requirements regarding sexuality content, school-provided healthcare services, and student mental, emotional, and physical health and well-being.
- Maintains that a parent has a fundamental right to make decisions concerning the upbringing, education, and care of the parent's child.
- Entitles the act's provisions regarding parental involvement, sexuality content, student health care services and student health and well-being as the "Parents' Bill of Rights."

#### **Released time religious instruction**

- Requires school districts to adopt a policy authorizing students to be excused from school to attend a released time course in religious instruction.
- Requires school districts to collaborate with the sponsoring entity of a released time course in religious instruction to identify a time for the course to be offered during the school day.
- Permits a school district to require a sponsoring entity's instructors and volunteers undergo criminal records checks in a manner determined by the district.

### **H.B. 70**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Fowler Arthur and Gross

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Requires school districts and chartered nonpublic schools to adopt a policy regarding the administration of over-the-counter drugs to students.

## H.B. 147

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Fowler Arthur and A. Miller

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; conforming amendments effective January 1, 2025

### **School employee misconduct**

- Expands the definition of “license” with regard to school employee misconduct to include pupil services personnel registration, private provider registration under the Autism Scholarship Program, and the authorization for certain unlicensed individuals to teach in high-performing school districts.
- Requires school districts, educational service centers, and chartered nonpublic schools to file a report as follows:
  - With the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding a licensed employee who retires during a disciplinary investigation for misconduct; and
  - When a licensed employee is removed from the list of eligible substitute teachers because it has reasonably been determined the employee committed an act unbecoming to the teaching profession.
- Requires the State Board of Education to revoke the license of an individual who is convicted of prostitution unless the individual was coerced into committing the offense.

### **Special needs scholarship programs**

- Permits qualified credentialed providers under the Jon Peterson Special Needs or Autism Scholarship Programs to offer services virtually.
- Adds certain credentialed professionals to the list of professionals who may provide services under those programs.
- Subjects any registered private provider approved to participate in the Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program to a criminal records check and RAPBACK.

### **Participation in interscholastic athletics at a different school**

- Permits a student who is the victim of certain qualifying offenses to participate in interscholastic athletics at a different school.
- Prohibits a district or school, interscholastic conference, and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and other organizations from imposing extra fees, rules, penalties, or restrictions on students who participate in interscholastic athletics at a different school under the act.

### **Tickets to school-affiliated events**

- Expands the law regarding cash payments for school-affiliated events by:
  - Prohibiting schools from establishing different ticket prices based on whether a ticket is purchased using cash or any other payment method; and

- Requiring schools to charge students from a school participating in an event a ticket price that is less than the price charged adults.
- Subjects OHSAA and other organizations regulating interscholastic athletics to the law regarding cash payments for school-affiliated events.

### **Base cost calculation for FYs 2024 and 2025**

- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to calculate several cost components included in a school district's base cost calculation using the sum of the enrolled ADM of each school district that *reported* the data, rather than that of *every* school district.

### **High School Financial Literacy Fund**

- Requires the Director of Education and Workforce to request, and the Director of Budget and Management to transfer, up to \$1.5 million from the General Revenue Fund to the High School Financial Literacy Fund during the biennium ending June 30, 2025.
- Changes the High School Financial Literacy Fund from a custodial fund to a state treasury fund.

### **Literacy improvement professional development stipend**

- Requires public schools to pay a pre-kindergarten teacher a \$1,200 stipend for completing professional development in the science of reading and evidence-based strategies for effective literacy instruction.

### **Authorized private before and after school care programs**

- Adds an owner, director, administrator, and employee of an authorized private before and after school care program, a type of licensed school child program, to the existing law requiring criminal records and other background checks for child care providers.

## **H.B. 206**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Click and Robb Blasdel

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025; appropriations effective January 8, 2025

### **Expulsion policies**

- Permits a public school to establish a policy that authorizes the district superintendent, or equivalent administrator, to expel a student for not more than 180 school days for actions that pose "imminent and severe endangerment" to the health and safety of other students or school employees.
- Requires the superintendent to develop conditions for a student expelled for imminent and severe endangerment to satisfy before that student may be reinstated, including an assessment to determine whether the student poses a danger.

- Requires the superintendent to assess the student at the end of the expulsion period to determine whether the student has shown “sufficient rehabilitation” to be reinstated, and permits the superintendent to extend the expulsion for up to 90 additional school days, subject to further reassessment and extensions.
- Requires that cost of the assessment, if done by a psychiatrist, psychologist, or school psychologist employed or contracted by the district or school, be paid by the district or school.
- Requires that cost of the assessment, if done by a psychiatrist, psychologist, or school psychologist who is not employed or contracted by the district or school, be referred for payment to the student’s health insurance, with the remainder paid by the district or school.
- Permits a superintendent to develop contingent conditions for a student’s reinstatement and to revoke a student’s reinstatement if those conditions are not met.
- Expressly makes all determinations by a superintendent regarding an expulsion for imminent and severe endangerment subject to the same notification requirements and appeals process as other types of expulsions under continuing law.
- Requires the superintendent to develop a plan for the continued education of a student during the expulsion period within 15 school days of the beginning of the expulsion period for a student who does not have an individualized education program (IEP), or within ten school days for a student who does have an IEP.
- Requires the district or school to specify reasons for which the expulsion period may be reduced and establish guidelines regarding appropriate reinstatement.
- Requires the superintendent to develop a list of alternative educational options for those expelled in accordance with the act.
- Requires boards to provide the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) records of each expulsion made under a policy adopted under the act and any changes to a pupil’s expulsion status.
- Permits a school to which a student with an expulsion record transfers to request the student’s expulsion record from the former school or from DEW, and requires the former school or DEW to provide the requested records.
- Prohibits a school from withholding records related to a student’s expulsion for outstanding debt attributed to the student.
- Requires public schools to include specified demographic data on expelled students and information on those expulsions in the expulsion records submitted to DEW.

### **School choice program administration funding**

- Increases the appropriation earmark for school choice program administration in FY 2025 from up to \$4 million to up to \$8.14 million.

## Community school automatic closure exemptions

- Exempts from closure requirements for the 2024-2025 school year any community school that meets established closure criteria but, for any of the 2022-2023, 2023-2024, or 2024-2025 school years, receives a performance index score on its report card within five points below the score required to receive two stars on its achievement rating.
- Requires an exempted community school to close if it continues to meet the closure criteria in the 2025-2026 school year or if it meets the similar specified criteria in the 2026-2027 school year.

## Storage and use of drugs to treat seizures

- Permits a public or chartered nonpublic school to store a student's prescribed seizure drug in an easily accessible location.
- Permits a student to possess the student's prescribed seizure drug if the school principal or school nurse receives written approval from the student's physician and, if the student is a minor, from the student's parent or guardian.
- Permits an authorized school employee, contractor, or volunteer to administer a student's prescribed seizure drug if the individual receives a copy of the written approval from the student's physician or training.

## H.B. 214

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Holmes

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; conforming amendments effective January 1, 2025

- Requires each school district, community school, and STEM school to adopt and post a policy against using statements of commitment to, or soliciting or requiring specified individuals to affirmatively ascribe to, specific beliefs, affiliations, ideals, or principles concerning political movements or ideology.
- Requires each school district, community school, and STEM school to adopt a policy that reasonably accommodates the sincerely held religious beliefs and practices of students that includes permitting up to three excused absences for religious expression days, and entitles this provision the "Religious Expression Days or R.E.D. Act."

## H.B. 250

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Miranda and Richardson

**Effective date:** August 14, 2024; appropriations effective May 15, 2024; conforming amendments effective January 1, 2025.

## Military seal

- Renames the "Military Enlistment Seal" for high school diplomas to the "Military Seal."
- Establishes new pathways for a high school student to earn the seal.

## Cellular telephone policy

- Requires each public school to adopt a policy governing the use of cellular telephones by students during school hours.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce to adopt a model policy governing the use of cellular telephones by students for use by public schools.

## Educator licenses

- Permits a licensed educator with a grade band specification given under former law to renew the license in accordance with either that law or the law in effect on the license's renewal date.
- Specifies that a licensed teacher employed by a district or school to teach outside the grade band designated on the teacher's license in accordance with continuing law is a "properly certified or licensed teacher."

## Pupil Transportation Pilot

- Divides the Pupil Transportation Pilot Program into two distinct programs with different requirements.
- Requires an educational service center (ESC) in the Franklin County program to identify students who are struggling with transportation issues as determined by their resident districts, instead of identifying districts, to participate in the program.
- Qualifies for the program students transported by an ESC in the Montgomery County program who are struggling with transportation issues who do not attend their resident school or are students with disabilities.
- Requires the ESCs of both programs to report students transported under the program to the Department of Education and Workforce.
- Permits the participating ESCs to use other approved vehicles for student transportation, rather than only school busses, and to use other authorized individuals in other approved vehicles, rather than only bus drivers.

## High school financial literacy

- Transfers administrative authority over the High School Financial Literacy Fund from the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Director of Education and Workforce.
- Requires the Department, instead of the State Board, to incorporate academic concepts of free market capitalism into the standards and model curriculum for high school financial literacy.

## Corrective change

- Changes an incorrect reference from the "State Board of Education" to the "Director of Education and Workforce" in the school psychologist law.

## Programs for parents of blind or visually impaired children

- Requires Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services to consult with the Department of Children and Youth in carrying out its educational program for parents of blind or visually impaired children.

## Adoption grants

- Increases the FY 2024 and FY 2025 appropriations for the Adoption Grant Program by \$19 million each year, and reappropriates the program's unexpended, unencumbered balance at the end of FY 2024 to FY 2025.

## H.B. 432

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Jones

**Effective date:** Emergency: sections related to student data privacy and access of school-issued devices effective December 9, 2024; other sections effective March 10, 2025

## Career-technical educator licenses

- Permits an individual without an offer for employment in a school district to directly apply for an initial career-technical workforce development educator license.
- Permits an applicant with an offer of employment to enroll in one of two alternative licensure programs in lieu of a career-technical workforce development educator preparation program that meets continuing law requirements.
- Requires the State Board of Education to issue a career-technical educator license to qualifying individuals who are already validly licensed educators.

## Student data privacy

- Clarifies that the State Board's authority to take licensure action against an individual who uses or releases confidential student information for purposes other than student instruction applies if the use is committed *purposely* or the release is committed *intentionally*, and violates the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators.
- Revises the terminology in the student data privacy law.

## Access of school-issued devices

- Removes the requirement that a school district provide advance notice prior to accessing school-issued devices for an educational purpose.
- Permits a school district to access school-issued devices subject to a subpoena.
- Limits the 72-hour parental notice of electronic access requirement to one of the following:
  - The access is under judicial warrant or subpoena or related to a missing or stolen device, and the school district initiates responsive action; or

- The access is to prevent or respond to a threat to life or safety and the school district initiates action in response to specified events.
- Removes the requirement to give notice 72 hours after a threat to life or safety has ceased when the notice itself would pose a threat to life or safety.
- Requires a service contract between a school district and a county board of developmental disabilities, educational service center, information technology center, or other school district to indicate which contracting party is responsible for providing parental notice of access.

### **STEM Program of Excellence designation**

- Requires a STEM Program of Excellence to serve all students for whom the program is designed, rather than serve all students in the grade for which the program is designed or only gifted students.
- Maintains the requirement that a STEM Program of Excellence’s curriculum emphasize design thinking but eliminates the requirement that it be a “school-wide approach.”

### **Corrective changes**

- Makes several corrective changes to the education law.

## **S.B. 17**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Wilson

**Effective date:** June 12, 2024

- Requires that academic concepts of free market capitalism be incorporated into the state standards and model curriculum for financial literacy and entrepreneurship for grades 9 through 12.
- Permits students to fulfill the financial literacy instruction requirement for high school graduation by successfully completing AP Microeconomics or AP Macroeconomics.
- Permits math teachers to teach financial literacy without a financial literacy license validation.

## **S.B. 29**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. S. Huffman

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

### **Use of educational records by technology providers**

- Specifies that educational records created, received, maintained, or disseminated by a technology provider that has contracted with a school district are solely the district’s property.



- Generally prohibits a technology provider from selling, sharing, or disseminating educational records or using those records for a commercial purpose.
- Requires that each contract between a technology provider and a school district ensure appropriate security safeguards for educational records.
- Requires each school district to provide parents and students with notice of any curriculum, testing, or assessment technology provider contract affecting a student's educational records.
- Permits a school district or a technology provider to electronically access or monitor a student's activity on a school-issued device only in limited circumstances and requires the school district to notify parents of any permitted access.

### **Educational support services data**

- Prohibits any person from releasing or permitting access to educational support services data concerning any student attending a public school for any reason.
- Requires that educational support services data be made available to the state Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities agency.
- Exempts educational support services data from Ohio's Public Records laws.

### **Licensure penalties for release of confidential information**

- Permits the State Board of Education to refuse to issue a license to, or limit, suspend, or revoke the license of, an individual who uses or releases student information that is confidential under state or federal law for purposes other than student instruction.

## **S.B. 94**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Brenner and Landis

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; appropriations effective July 24, 2024

### **Campus accountability and modernization**

#### **Policy on harassment and intimidation**

- Requires state institutions of higher education and private for-profit colleges to adopt and enforce a policy on racial, religious, and ethnic harassment and intimidation.
- Requires private nonprofit institutions of higher education to adopt and enforce a policy on racial and ethnic harassment and intimidation.
- Requires that each institution's policy include related training, complaint procedures, creation of an anti-hate task force, and collaboration to increase security.

#### **Committee on combating harassment and intimidation**

- Requires the Chancellor of Higher Education to establish a committee on combating antisemitism and other forms of racial, religious, and ethnic harassment and intimidation.

## Harassment and intimidation reports

- Requires each institution of higher education to submit an annual report to the Chancellor of all harassment and intimidation reports submitted to the federal government consistent with the federal Clery Act.

## Time, place, and manner restrictions

- Requires each state institution to publicize any time, place, or manner restrictions it places on its students' expressive activities.

## Campus programs

- Requires the Chancellor to establish and administer the Campus Student Safety Grant Program to award grants to institutions of higher education to enhance security measures and increase student safety.
  - Appropriates \$1 million in FY 2025 to support the program.
- Requires the Chancellor to establish and administer the Campus Community Grant Program to award grants to institutionally sanctioned student organizations to support intergroup and interfaith outreach and cultural competency between institutionally sanctioned student organizations.
  - Appropriates \$1 million in FY 2025 to support the program.
- Establishes the Campus Security Support Program under which the Chancellor must distribute funds to institutionally sanctioned student organizations affiliated with communities at risk for increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment to enhance security measures and increase student safety.
  - Appropriates \$2 million in FY 2025 to the program.

## Act title

- Entitles this portion of the act the Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect University Students "CAMPUS" Act.

## Financial cost and aid disclosure form

- Requires state universities and community colleges to provide a financial cost and aid disclosure form to newly admitted students.

## Educator preparation programs

- Requires the Chancellor, in conjunction with the Department of Education and Workforce, to conduct a survey of educator preparation programs and to issue recommendations via a report.
  - Appropriates \$150,000 to pay for the survey.
- Increase the Department of Higher Education's appropriation to cover the cost of its duties regarding educator preparation programs by \$2 million in FY 2025.

## **Electronic filing of pleadings in common pleas court**

- Requires the clerk of a common pleas court to determine whether the filing of pleadings or documents in electronic format may be accomplished by email or through an online platform.
- Prohibits the clerk from doing the following:
  - Requiring that any fee for electronic filing be paid before the filing, unless the clerk has provided for an electronic payment system; or
  - Requiring a fee for electronic filing that exceeds the applicable fee for filing pleadings or documents on paper.
- Stipulates that these provisions do not apply to probate or juvenile courts.

## **Filing of pleadings in municipal or county court**

- Provides that, beginning not later than July 21, 2025, pleadings or documents may be filed with the clerk of a municipal court or the clerk of a county court either in paper or electronic format.
- Stipulates that documents created by the clerk in the exercise of the clerk's duties may be created in an electronic format.
- Requires the clerk of a municipal court or county court to determine whether the filing of pleadings or documents in electronic format may be accomplished by email or through an online platform.
- Prohibits the clerk from doing the following:
  - Requiring that any fee for electronic filing be paid before the filing, unless the clerk has provided for an electronic payment system.
  - Requiring a fee for electronic filing that exceeds the applicable fee for filing pleadings or documents on paper.

## **Clerks of court authorization**

- Removes the requirement that funds for the computerization of municipal and common pleas court clerks' offices be authorized and disbursed by the court, and instead permits the clerk to do so if the clerk has been elected.
- Removes the requirement that funds for the computerization of county court clerks' offices be authorized and disbursed by the court, and instead permits the clerk to do so.
- Specifies that, in a county in which the clerk of the court of common pleas is appointed, the county executive must authorize and disburse those funds.

## **Municipal and county court additional fee increase**

- Permits municipal and county courts to increase the maximum amount of their additional fees from \$10 to \$20 to cover the computerization of the clerk's office.

## Liquor control laws

### A-3a liquor permit: manufacturing limit

- Revises the limit on the number of gallons of spirituous liquor that a micro-distillery (A-3a liquor permit holder) may manufacture each year as follows:
  - Increases the amount from less than 100,000 gallons to any amount, if the micro-distillery was issued an A-3a permit before October 24, 2024 (the act's effective date), regardless of whether the permit premises location or the premises ownership is transferred and the permit holder is issued a new A-3a permit after that date.
  - Retains the 100,000-gallon limit for a distiller that begins manufacturing spirituous liquor under an A-3a permit on and after October 24, 2024.

### Tasting samples of spirituous liquor

- Requires tasting samples of spirituous liquor, when provided at a liquor agency store, to be provided for free, rather than requiring at least a 50¢ charge for each tasting sample as under former law.

### Grains of paradise as adulterated alcohol

- Removes grains of paradise from the substances that are prohibited for use in and considered an adulterating agent to spirituous liquor, alcoholic liquor, or beer.

## Recorded documents and electronic modernization

- Requires counties to provide an electronic means of recording instruments and of accessing recorded instruments by June 30, 2026.
- Allows county recorders to charge a document preservation surcharge.
- Increases the recording fee for living wills, health care powers of attorney, and instruments related to personal property.
- Appropriates \$6 million for the Office of the Treasurer to distribute funds to reimburse counties to implement the act's provisions.

## Powers of attorney

- Modifies requirements regarding powers of attorney utilized for the execution of real property instruments.

## Mortgage subrogation

- Allows a mortgage that was used to satisfy a previous mortgage to be subrogated to the priority of (have the same priority as) the previous mortgage if certain conditions are met.
- Prohibits a mortgage lender seeking subrogation from being denied subrogation for specifically enumerated reasons.
- Provides that the holder of a subordinate mortgage or lien retains the same subordinate position had the previous mortgage or lien not been satisfied.

## **Rental property owner's agent**

- Allows a rental property owner's agent to file the owner's contact information with the county auditor.

## **Community reinvestment areas**

- Clarifies a law that allows political subdivisions that enter into a community reinvestment area (CRA) property tax exemption agreement to claw back exempted taxes if the property does not comply with the agreement.

## **Stock state banks**

- Expands the reasons a stock state bank can amend its articles of incorporation to include reasons permitted under Ohio Corporation Law.

## **Law enforcement tows**

- Expands the law enforcement entities that may order the towing of a motor vehicle to include university campus police departments, park district police forces, and natural resources officers and wildlife officers of the Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).
- Grants a university campus police department, a park district police force, and ODNR the authority to dispose of an unclaimed towed motor vehicle or an abandoned junk motor vehicle.
- Emphasizes that the owner or lienholder of a motor vehicle towed by law enforcement is responsible for any expenses and charges incurred in towing and storing the vehicle.

## **Documentary service charges**

- Increases the maximum documentary service charge that may be imposed as part of the sale or lease of a motor vehicle.
- Requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles annually to determine an updated maximum charge based on the cumulative percentage change to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) since July 2006.
- Requires the Registrar to publish the updated maximum charge on a website maintained by the Department of Public Safety.
- Retains law that limits the charge to 10% of the sale or lease price.

## **Lender-provided certificate of title**

- Repeals a requirement that a lender provide the purchaser of a motor vehicle with a physical certificate of title following full payment of the loan, at no extra cost to the purchaser.
- Waives unpaid fines for violations of that requirement.
- Requires a lender, instead, to send a written notice, including through electronic communication, to the vehicle owner referring them to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles

(BMV) website for information on titling options, either when the owner takes out the loan or discharges it.

- Requires BMV to include titling options, including fees, on its website for owners to reference after their motor vehicle loan is discharged.

## **Public depositories**

- Eliminates the prohibition against a financial institution that is subject to a cease-and-desist order from serving as a public depository.
- Requires a public depository to notify the governing board if the depository becomes party to an active prompt corrective action directive.
- Specifies that institutions are ineligible to serve as public depositories while under a prompt corrective action directive unless authorized by a governing board.
- Relieves certain public officials from liability for loss of public moneys deposited in a failed public depository.

## **S.B. 104**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Cirino and Brenner

**Effective date:** February 25, 2025

### **College Credit Plus Program**

- Revises the operations of the College Credit Plus Program.

### **Single-sex facilities and accommodations**

- Requires public and chartered nonpublic schools, educational service centers (ESCs), and institutions of higher education to designate specified facilities for the exclusive use of students of either the male or female biological sex.
- Prohibits schools and ESCs from permitting members of one biological sex to use a student restroom, locker room, changing room, or shower room that is designated for the other biological sex.
- Prohibits institutions of higher education from knowingly permitting members of one biological sex to use a student restroom, locker room, changing room, or shower room that is designated for the other biological sex.
- Prohibits schools and ESCs from permitting a member of one biological sex to share overnight accommodations with a member of the other biological sex.
- Entitles this portion of the act the “Protect All Students Act.”

## S.B. 112

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Rulli

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Requires protective door assemblies in certain school buildings to comply with the standards of the National Life Safety Code (NFPA 101) developed by the National Fire Protection Association in effect at the time the protective door assembly was installed or the building code standards in effect at the time of installation.
- Requires school governing authorities to verify compliance by causing an annual inspection to be conducted by a qualified inspector.
- Requires school governing authorities to maintain records of those inspections.
- Requires the authority having jurisdiction to annually inspect those records to monitor compliance with the act's requirements.
- Requires the authority having jurisdiction to issue a citation if a protective door assembly in a school building remains noncompliant for more than 18 months after the first failed inspection, or more than 180 days following a subsequent failed inspection.
- Prohibits a citation if the school governing authority is taking steps to achieve compliance.
- Prohibits assessing a civil penalty or fine with the citation, but requires the school governing authority to post the citation on its website.
- Allows a school governing authority to appeal a citation in the same manner as other Ohio Fire Code citations and penalties.
- Specifies that a temporary door-locking device in compliance with rules adopted by the Fire Marshal is compliant for the purposes of the act, regardless of any contrary standards of NFPA 101.
- Requires the State Fire Marshal to adopt rules necessary to implement the act's requirements.
- Names the act the "Ohio Childhood Safety Act."

## S.B. 168

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Reynolds

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; conforming amendments effective January 1, 2025

### **Exemption from statutory requirements**

- Permits a school district to renew its exemption from certain statutory requirements related to teacher licensure and other topics every three years, rather than one three-year term only.

- Permits a school district to qualify for an exemption if, on its most recent state report card, it received a performance rating of five stars on the Progress component, a four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of at least 93%, and a five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of at least 95%.
- Eliminates an exemption from statutory requirements regarding teacher qualifications under the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.
- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce annually to notify eligible districts about this exemption and their eligibility for it.

## **Teachers and other school employees**

- Permits school districts to develop and use their own frameworks for teacher evaluation, instead of using the framework developed by the State Board of Education.
- Designates a teacher or school counselor as “consistently high-performing” if the teacher or counselor receives the highest level of performance rating in their evaluation for at least four of the past five years and meets at least one other requirement.
- Exempts consistently high-performing school counselors from additional coursework or professional development requirements for license renewal.
- Requires each municipal school district (currently only the Cleveland Metropolitan School District) and its teachers’ labor organization to endeavor to include in the district’s evaluation procedures the development of a professional growth plan or improvement plan and a final summative conference to discuss the evaluation results.
- Requires the State Board to issue an alternative resident educator license to an individual who holds a master’s degree, and passes an exam, in the subject area to be taught.
- Permits the Department to establish alternative pathways for bachelor’s degree holders to obtain an educator license to work as an administrator or superintendent, and requires the State Board to issue a license to an individual who completes one of those pathways.
- Requires the Department to submit to the General Assembly by February 21, 2025, a proposal for an apprenticeship program for school principals.
- Codifies an administrative rule permitting the State Board to issue an educator license to qualified out-of-state educators.
- Changes the grade band specification for an educator license from grades 6 through 12 to grades 7 through 12.
- Exempts districts from entering into supplemental contracts with teachers assigned to teach classes outside the normal school day if the teacher agrees to a regular schedule outside the school day, the teacher’s total daily hours do not exceed the normal school day, and requirements of the collective bargaining agreement are satisfied.



- Modifies the public notice and meeting requirements that apply when a board or commission seeks to employ in certain positions retired members of the State Teachers Retirement System or the School Employees Retirement System.
- Limits which unlicensed employees of a school district, educational service center, or school must be enrolled in RAPBACK to those whose employer reasonably determines their position may involve routine interaction with a child or regular responsibility for the care, custody, or control of a child.

### **Board of education meetings**

- Clarifies that a school district board of education is not required to hold a separate, individual public hearing on a proposed school calendar, but that the calendar may be addressed as part of another public hearing or meeting.
- Requires that the record of proceedings of a board of education meeting be read at the board's next regular meeting, instead of at the next succeeding meeting.

### **Remote administration of state assessments**

- Requires the Department to establish a pilot program for the 2024-2025 school year to test the feasibility of remotely administering and proctoring the state assessments.

### **Sexually transmitted infection education**

- Changes references from "venereal disease" education to "sexually transmitted infection" education in school district health education curriculum.
- Changes the requirements regarding conception and marriage in the sexually transmitted infection education in schools to teach that conceiving children at an early age or outside of marriage increases the likelihood of hardship in life.

### **Tutoring and remedial education program**

- Modifies payment and tutor registration procedures for the Tutoring and Remedial Education Program.

### **Intradistrict open enrollment**

- Requires a school district that conducts an intradistrict enrollment lottery to employ certain deadline and notice procedures.

### **Student transportation – afterschool time**

- Prohibits the Department from determining a school district noncompliant with transportation requirements when a school provides school-supervised academic services to the affected students promptly after school for no more than 60 minutes.

## **School turnaround pilot**

- Requires the Department to administer a five-year School Turnaround Pilot Program to address chronic low performance in school districts and community schools, and establishes a school building selection process.
- Requires the Department to approve one or more eligible external service providers to partner with districts, schools, community school sponsors, and school support teams.
- Requires districts, community schools, and service providers to report data regularly to the Department, and requires the Department to conduct an annual evaluation of the program.

## **Community schools**

- Permits a community school sponsor that was rated “exemplary” on its most recent evaluation to sponsor up to 200 community schools.
- Eliminates the requirement that community schools conduct monthly student residency reviews.
- Eliminates e-school enrollment limits.
- Eliminates from a sponsorship contract the requirement that a sponsor annually report the results of a community school’s academic and fiscal performance evaluation.
- Prohibits the Department from evaluating community school sponsors for the 2024-2025 school year, unless a sponsor elects to be evaluated.
- By March 31, 2025, requires the Department to provide legislative recommendations for a comprehensive community school sponsor performance evaluation framework.
- Permits the Director of Education and Workforce to reallocate excess funds in FY 2024 and FY 2025 for other purposes in state foundation aid to fully pay supplemental funding for dropout prevention and recovery e-schools.

## **School district competitive bidding**

- Increases statutory competitive bidding thresholds to \$75,000 for school districts for 2024, and subsequently increases the amount annually by 3%, to match that of other governmental entities.

## **Debt limit for nonrequired local initiatives**

- Temporarily increases the cap, until December 31, 2027, on the amount of debt a school district may exceed for nonrequired locally funded initiatives, from 50% of the local share of the basic project cost to 75% of that cost.

## **Base cost calculation for FYs 2024 and 2025**

- Requires the Department to calculate several cost components included in a school district's base cost calculation using the sum of the enrolled ADM of each school district that *reported* that data, rather than the enrolled ADM of *every* school district.

## **High School Financial Literacy Fund**

- Requires the Director of Education and Workforce to request, and the Director of Budget and Management to transfer, up to \$1.5 million from the General Revenue Fund to the High School Financial Literacy Fund during the biennium ending June 30, 2025.

## **Student training at early learning and development programs**

- Requires institutions with early childhood teacher preparation programs to permit students who are employed by an early learning and development program to complete required student training as paid employees of their program.
- Requires the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Department of Children and Youth to collaborate with industry stakeholders on strategies to assist employees of early learning and development programs to complete student training.

## **Grow Your Own Teacher Program**

- Expands the types of schools that may participate in, expands scholarship eligibility for, and makes other changes to, the Grow Your Own Teacher Program.

## **Removal of obsolete provisions**

- Eliminates several policies and programs from the laws governing the Department of Education and Workforce, the State Board of Education, and schools more generally that have expired or no longer apply.

# **S.B. 208**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

## **Open enrollment for military children**

- Requires school districts that prohibit open enrollment, or accept open enrollment only of students from adjacent districts, to permit military children who are not residents of the district to open enroll.

## **Instruction on interactions with peace officers**

- Eliminates law requiring instruction on proper interactions with peace officers to high school students and in beginning driver training.

## **Sexual abuse prevention training**

- Makes permissive, rather than mandatory, for public schools to use law enforcement officers or prosecutors to provide employee in-service training on child sexual abuse.

## **Pre-service teacher permits**

- Permits a pre-service teacher permit to be for one year in duration.

## **Virtual services under special needs scholarships**

- Permits educational aides or assistants and instructional assistants to provide services under the Autism and Jon Peterson Special Needs scholarships virtually.

## **Technological equipment**

- Requires each school district and educational service center to seek to meet the varying and unique needs of students and teachers and consider certain factors when purchasing technological office equipment.

## **Regional Partnerships Program**

- Establishes the Prenatal-to-Five Early Childhood to Post-Secondary Regional Partnerships Program to support early childhood to post-secondary regional partnerships.

## **Home education learning pods**

- Defines home education learning pod as a voluntary association of parents who direct their children's education through home education.
- Exempts home education learning pods from child care regulations.
- Prohibits a county or township from restricting or limiting the location of home education learning pods within any district/zone in the county or township.
- Prohibits a county or township from imposing additional or more stringent zoning regulations on a building or residence based solely on its association with or use by a home education learning pod.

# Elections

## H.B. 74

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Hall and Lightbody

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Prefilled elections forms**

- Prohibits a person from preprinting or filling out any portion of a voter registration form or an application for absent voter's ballots on behalf of an applicant.
- Makes exceptions for applicants who require assistance by reason of blindness, disability, or illiteracy.
- Allows election officials to continue preprinting names and addresses on absentee ballot applications.
- Allows a uniformed services or overseas absent voter's relative to complete a form on the voter's behalf, as permitted under prior law.

### **Voter registration through BMV**

- Requires all voter registrations and updates completed at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) as part of a customer's transaction to be sent electronically to the Secretary of State within 24 hours, with no paper form required and no form sent to a board of elections.
- Clarifies that when a customer submits a notice of change of address to the BMV, the BMV must offer the applicant the opportunity to submit a change of address for voter registration purposes electronically in conjunction with the BMV transaction.
- Requires BMV deputy registrars to continue to send any paper voter registration forms that are returned to a deputy registrar to the local board of elections within five days.

### **Statewide election petitions**

- Requires the Attorney General to certify the title of any statewide initiative or referendum petition, in addition to its summary, as a fair and truthful statement of the proposal before the petitioners may begin collecting signatures.
- Applies certain requirements related to paid petition circulators to the circulators of a political party formation petition.

### **Audits of election results**

- Requires the boards of elections to conduct post-election audits after every election, instead of only general elections and primary elections held in even-numbered years.

## Approval of voting systems

- Renames the Board of Voting Machine Examiners as the Board of Voting Systems Examiners.
- Adds a cybersecurity expert appointed by the Secretary of State as a nonvoting member of the Board.
- Requires the Board to examine, test, and approve voter registration systems and ballots on demand voting systems, and requires the Secretary to certify those systems, in the same manner as the Board and the Secretary do for voting equipment.
- Requires the Secretary to adopt standards for the security and integrity of voter registration systems and ballots on demand voting systems.
- Requires those systems to meet any standards adopted by the federal Election Assistance Commission to be certified.
- Prohibits the Secretary or a board of elections from acquiring a voter registration system or a ballots on demand voting system that has not been certified under the act.
- Allows a board of elections that was using a system before the act took effect to continue using that system until the county acquires a new system.

## Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board

- Creates the temporary Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board, which must make recommendations regarding cybersecurity and fraud prevention in the information technology (IT) systems and shared services used across state agencies.

## H.B. 1 – Special Session

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Seitz

**Effective date:** September 1, 2024

- Prohibits a foreign national from knowingly making, or promising to make, a campaign contribution or expenditure or a disbursement for the direct cost of producing or airing an electioneering communication, except for an independent expenditure regarding a local ballot issue.
- Prohibits individuals and certain entities from knowingly soliciting or accepting a contribution or expenditure from a foreign national and from making a contribution or expenditure using funds the person knows were received from a foreign national for political purposes.
- Prohibits any person from knowingly aiding or facilitating a violation described above.
- Prohibits a lawful permanent U.S. resident, also known as a green card holder, from making contributions or expenditures regarding ballot issues or candidates.
- Provides criminal and financial penalties for violations of the act.

- Gives the Attorney General exclusive authority to investigate and prosecute violations of the act.

## **H.B. 2 – Special Session**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Dobos

**Effective date:** September 1, 2024

- Delays the deadline, from August 7 to September 1, for a major political party to certify its presidential and vice-presidential candidates to the Secretary of State for the 2024 general election.
- Allows a party to make that certification for the 2024 election in writing by any reasonably reliable method that, under the circumstances, will provide for the Secretary to receive it by the deadline, including hand delivery, U.S. mail, commercial carrier, facsimile, or email.

## Employment, Labor, and Professional Regulations

### H.B. 106

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Jarrells and Lipps

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Requires an employer, on the employer's regular paydays, to provide each employee with a statement or access to a statement of the employee's earnings and deductions for the pay period.
- Requires an employer who does not provide the statement or access to the statement at the required time to provide the statement not later than ten days after receiving an employee's request for the statement.
- Permits an employee who does not receive the requested statement within ten days of requesting it to report the violation to the Director of Commerce, who must notify the employer in writing of the violation.
- Requires the employer, if an employer receives a notice from the Director, to post the notice or a copy of it in a conspicuous place on the employer's premises for ten days.

### H.B. 158

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Roemer and M. Miller

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

## Cosmetology and barber licensing

### School licenses

- Replaces the barber school license and school of cosmetology license with a single school license.
- Establishes the requirements for a school license that are similar to the former requirements for a barber school or school of cosmetology license.
- Allows a school to employ individuals who are not licensed barber instructors to teach subjects related to business and management.
- Allows an applicant meeting the act's requirements to renew an expired barber school or school of cosmetology license as a school license, and extends the term for a barber school license set to expire on August 31, 2026, until January 31, 2027.

### Disciplinary actions

- Modifies the reasons for which the State Cosmetology and Barber Board may take disciplinary action against a person for a violation of the Barber Law.



- Changes the amount of a fine the Board may impose for a violation of the Barber Law, and requires the Board to certify a fine that remains unpaid for 91 days to the Attorney General for collection.
- Allows the Board to enter into a consent agreement with a license holder in lieu of an adjudication under the Barber Law.
- Makes it permissive, rather than mandatory, for the Board to report to a prosecuting officer violations of the Cosmetology Law governing unauthorized practice, and authorizes the Board to report other violations of the Barber Law to a prosecuting officer.

### **Barber licensing**

- Modifies the requirements for a barber license by reducing the minimum age from 18 to 16 and adding that an applicant must submit certain documentation, including a photograph and biometric fingerprint scan, with the license application.
- Eliminates the statutory 75% passing score for barber examinations, and instead requires the Board to adopt rules specifying the passing score, which cannot exceed 75%.
- Eliminates waiting periods to retake parts of an examination and the additional study required in certain circumstances.
- Establishes a fee of not more than \$100 to take an examination that the applicant previously applied to take but failed to appear.
- Requires the Board to issue a temporary pre-examination work permit to practice barbering to an individual who applies for and is eligible to take the barber license examination if the individual meets certain conditions.
- Changes the “barber teacher” and “assistant barber teacher” licenses to “barber instructor” and “assistant barber instructor” licenses, and modifies the requirements for the licenses.
- Makes permissive, rather than mandatory, that the Board adopt rules establishing a continuing education requirement to renew a barber, barber instructor, or assistant barber instructor license.
- Allows an individual licensed in another country to teach the theory and practice of barbering to apply for a barber instructor or assistant barber instructor license.
- Establishes a fee of not more than \$150 for issuing or renewing an assistant barber instructor license.
- Expands the Board’s authority to develop procedures to classify as inactive a barber, barber instructor, or assistant barber instructor license.
- Requires that the holder of an expired barber instructor or assistant barber instructor license must pay a restoration fee to have the license restored.

- Establishes the fees to restore an expired assistant barber instructor license and increases the cap on the restoration fee for an expired barber license.
- Establishes that the statutory amount is the ceiling for a fee and makes other changes to the amount of fees charged under the Barber Law.
- Modifies the requirements for a barber shop license and specifies that the license is not transferrable from one owner to another or from one location to another.
- Prohibits an individual from providing massage therapy, cosmetic therapy, or any other professional service in a barber shop without a current, valid license or Board authorization.
- Expands the exemption from regulation under the Barber Law to include dentists, hospital and nursing home volunteers, nurse aides and other hospital or nursing home employees, massage therapists, and inmates who provide barbering services to other inmates.

### **Cosmetology licensing**

- Modifies the requirements for a cosmetology practicing license, advanced license, or instructor license.
- Eliminates the temporary work permit allowing an individual holding an inactive practicing, advanced, or cosmetology instructor license to practice or teach a branch of cosmetology.
- Removes requirements relating to education level and disclosing where an applicant is practicing for a boutique services registration.
- Removes, for purposes of renewing a cosmetology license or boutique services registration, the Board's authority to extend the period to complete continuing education requirements and charge a fine for that extension.
- Establishes civil penalties for violations of the Cosmetology Law relating to unlicensed practice and fraud and eliminates the criminal penalties for those violations.

### **Other changes**

- Permits any individual to file a confidential complaint with the Board alleging that an individual, salon, barber shop, school, or tanning facility has violated the Barber Law or Cosmetology Law or rules adopted under either law.
- Eliminates the requirement that an applicant for an independent contractor license hold either a barber shop or salon license and specifies the requirements the applicant must meet to receive the license.
- Removes the requirement that, to be issued a license by the Board, an applicant hold a license from a country that extends similar reciprocity to individuals holding a license the Board issues.

- Requires the holder of an expired barber, barber instructor, assistant barber instructor, or a practicing or advanced cosmetology license to complete continuing education requirements for ordinary license renewal to restore the license.
- Makes the fees charged by the Board under continuing law nonrefundable.
- Allows a license or registration holder to practice barbering or a branch of cosmetology on a dead human body at a funeral home or embalming facility.

### **Cosmetology Licensure Compact**

- Enters Ohio as a party to the Cosmetology Licensure Compact, the purpose of which is to facilitate the interstate practice and regulation of cosmetology and improve public access to and safety of cosmetology services.
- Requires Ohio to allow a cosmetologist licensed in another member state to practice in Ohio, subject to Ohio's laws and rules governing the practice of cosmetology.
- Requires the Board to appoint a member to the Cosmetology Licensure Compact Commission, a joint public agency created by the Compact to enforce the provisions and rules of the Compact.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding cosmetology licensees to the Commission's data system, including information related to licensure, adverse action, and the presence of investigative information.

### **For-profit hospitals – police officers**

- Extends the Secretary of State's authority to appoint and commission police officers for specified entities to for-profit hospitals that formerly were operated by a nonprofit hospital agency that employed police officers appointed by the Secretary of State.

## **H.B. 238**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Fowler Arthur and Klopfenstein

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025; certain provisions effective January 1, 2026

### **Occupational regulation review**

- Expands the definition of "occupational licensing board" for purposes of the General Assembly's statutorily required review of those boards to include boards that issue certifications and business licenses that require an applicant to satisfy a personal qualification.
- Requires that an occupational licensing board be triggered to expire on December 31 of the sixth year after it was created or last renewed, rather than on that date or on December 31, 2024, whichever is later, as under former law.

- Expands the scope of the Legislative Service Commission’s (LSC) statutorily required review of occupational regulations to include business licenses that require an applicant to satisfy a personal qualification.
- Clarifies that LSC must continue to issue reports regarding all occupations subject to regulation by the state, including business licenses that require the applicant to satisfy a personal qualification, after January 1, 2025.
- Renews for six years the occupational licensing boards reviewed this biennium by the General Assembly.
- Prohibits an occupational licensing board from adopting, providing, approving for credit, counting for credit, or requiring completion of continuing education curriculum or coursework, seminars, webinars, or online instruction that promote specified concepts related to protected class membership.

### **Accountancy Board**

- Beginning January 1, 2026, modifies the requirements a person must satisfy to receive a certified public accountant (CPA) certificate, and changes the standard a person must meet to sit for the CPA examination.
- Allows a CPA certified in another state whose principal place of business is not in Ohio to act as an Ohio CPA without an Ohio certificate, provided the person has obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher, completed an educational program with an accounting concentration, and passed all parts of the Uniform CPA Examination.

### **Department of Agriculture**

- Eliminates the requirement that an agricultural commodity tester be certified by the Director of Agriculture and replaces it with a requirement that a tester both:
  - Successfully complete training based on a USDA manual on grain inspecting; and
  - Successfully complete three hours of continuing education every five years.
- Requires a licensed agricultural commodity handler to submit to the Director a list of individuals who complete the training and continuing education, and requires the Director to maintain the list along with records of the handler’s license.
- Alters a licensure exemption under the auctioneers law for auctions conducted via an auction mediation company (e.g., eBay) by specifying that the exemption applies to all sales of personal property, provided certain buyer financial protections are met.
- Eliminates the following stipulations from the exemption:
  - That exempt sales are limited to \$10,000 per calendar year; and
  - That the person conducting the sale cannot receive any compensation for sales made on behalf of another person.

## **Architects Board**

- Prohibits the Architects Board from charging a fee to obtain an initial certificate of qualification to practice architecture.

## **Casino Control Commission**

- Caps the Ohio Casino Control Commission's application fee for the key employee license at no more than \$1,750.

## **Department of Commerce**

### **Division of Industrial Compliance**

- Extends the duration of a backflow technician certification from three years to five years.
- Establishes a \$75 fee for the five-year renewal, which was the fee for the three-year renewal.
- Reduces the application fee to take the examination for a boiler and pressure vessel inspector certification from \$150 to \$100.
- Caps the annual fee the Director of Commerce may charge for a certificate of competency or commission as a boiler and pressure vessel inspector at \$50.
- Reduces the application fee for a steam engineer, high pressure boiler operator, or low pressure boiler operator license from \$75 to \$25.
- Reduces the initial and renewal fee for a manufactured home installer's license from \$250 to \$150.

### **Division of Real Estate and Professional Licensing**

- Modifies the initial education requirement for an individual to become a licensed real estate broker.
- Eliminates the requirement that an applicant for a real estate broker license must complete at least two years of post-secondary education.
- Reduces the initial education required for an individual to become a licensed real estate salesperson from 120 hours in specified categories of instruction to 100 hours.
- Authorizes real estate brokers and salespersons to meet the specific topic-related education requirements for licensure by taking courses that are a part of a certificate program, not just a degree program, as under former law.
- Allows an institution with a certificate of registration from the State Board of Career Colleges and Schools to offer certificate programs to offer the pre-licensure education required for real estate brokers and salespersons.
- Requires, if an institution of higher education is approved by the Board to offer only certificate programs though distance education, that a prelicensure education course be

certified by the Association of Real Estate License Law Officials, the International Distance Education Certification Center, or another recognized certifying body.

- Extends the duration of a general real estate appraiser certificate, residential real estate appraiser license, residential real estate appraiser certificate, and real estate appraiser assistant registration from one to two years.
- Reduces the initial fee for a residential real estate appraiser certificate to an amount up to a maximum of \$300 over a two-year period from the former amount of up to a maximum of \$350 over a two-year period.
- Reduces the fee for a real estate appraiser assistant registration from a maximum of \$100 annually to a maximum of \$100 over a two-year period.
- Requires the Superintendent of Real Estate and Professional Licensing to establish a method by which a certificate holder, registrant, or licensee under the Real Estate Appraiser Law may electronically file the renewal application and pay the renewal fees.

### **State Cosmetology and Barber Board**

- Expands the services that a licensed natural hair stylist can provide to include arranging, dressing, pressing, curling, cutting, or singeing hair and styling wigs or hairpieces.
- Removes the requirement that an applicant for a boutique services registration have undergone formal training or an apprenticeship in boutique services.
- Eliminates the requirements that a boutique services registrant perform shampooing under a licensed individual's supervision and in preparation for a service from that individual.

### **Board of Nursing**

- Replaces the title "certified doula" with the title "state of Ohio certified doula" for the law prohibiting an individual from using such a title without holding a Board of Nursing-issued doula certificate.
- Requires the member of the Doula Advisory Group who represents the Board of Nursing to serve as the group's chairperson.
- Authorizes the Board of Nursing to display on its website the names of employers that employ nurses holding multistate licenses and have reported to the Board the number of those nurses that they employ.

### **Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission**

- Prohibits adopting administrative rules requiring jail support staff to obtain an occupational license.

### **Department of Public Safety**

- Extends the duration of private investigation and security licenses from one year to two years.

- Reduces the maximum fee for initial private investigation and security licenses from \$375 to \$200.

### **Bureau of Motor Vehicles**

- Eliminates the requirement that a motor vehicle salesperson be licensed to sell motor vehicles in Ohio.
- Eliminates the \$100 application fee for a salvage motor vehicle auction license.

### **State Racing Commission**

- Relocates and makes changes to the law governing the State Racing Commission's authority to issue licenses to persons involved in the horse racing industry.
- Lists each license to be issued and explicitly requires the Commission to adopt rules under the Administrative Procedure Act concerning the activities regulated under each license, the qualifications and other requirements to receive and maintain the license, and the annual fees.
- Eliminates certain licenses and reduces or eliminates fees for certain others.

### **Ohio Housing Finance Agency membership**

- Adds to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency four nonvoting members: two members of the Senate (one from each party), and two members of the House (one from each party), to be appointed by the Senate President and the Speaker of the House, respectively.

### **Boards and commissions – sunset review**

- Abolishes or renews various agencies that are subject to expiration under Sunset Review Law.
- Requires the Early Childhood Advisory Council to assume the responsibilities of the abolished Child Care Advisory Council.
- Abolishes the Board of Directors of the Ohio Health Reinsurance Program, and repeals various healthcare programs, which have been under suspension since 2014 following the enactment of the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Abolishes the Supervisory Investigative Panel of the State Dental Board, by name and requires the Secretary and Vice-Secretary of the Board to continue the panel's supervisory functions.
- Requires the State Dental Board to elect a vice-president from among its members.
- Exempts certain agencies from future review and expiration under Sunset Review Law.
- Renames the Environmental Education Council the Ohio Environmental Education Fund Advisory Council.

- Abolishes the Director of Health’s Advisory Group on Violent Deaths and requires the Director to prepare and publish an annual report summarizing the activities of the Ohio violent death reporting system.
- Abolishes the Ohio Medical Quality Foundation on January 1, 2026, and requires the Treasurer of State to assume the contractual duties of the Foundation and its trustees.

## **S.B. 28**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective Date:** October 24, 2024

- Enters Ohio into the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact to enhance the portability of physician assistant licenses through a process that complements the authority of the State Medical Board to license and discipline Ohio-licensed physician assistants.
- As a member of the Compact, requires Ohio to extend the privilege to practice to a physician assistant who is licensed in another state participating in the Compact, subject to Ohio’s laws and rules governing physician assistants.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding physician assistant licensees to the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact Commission’s data system, including information related to identification, examination, licensure, investigations, and adverse action.
- Revises the law governing the practice and certification of medication aides.
- Removes a restriction that obtaining a limited license to practice veterinary medicine is available only to nonresidents.

## **S.B. 40**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** Sections pertaining to the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact effective January 1, 2025; sections pertaining to insurance coverage of dental care services effective October 24, 2024

### **Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact**

- Enters Ohio as a party to the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact, the purpose of which is to facilitate the interstate practice of dentistry and dental hygiene and improve public access to dentistry and dental hygiene services.
- As a member of the Compact, requires Ohio to allow a dentist or dental hygienist licensed in another participating state to practice in Ohio, subject to Ohio’s laws and rules governing the practice of dentistry and dental hygiene.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding dentist and dental hygienist licensees to the Commission’s data system, including information related to licensure, adverse action, and the presence of significant investigative information.



- Requires the Board to issue a report assessing the impact of Ohio having entered into the Compact five years after the Compact takes effect.

### **Insurance coverage of dental care services**

- Requires health plan issuers to notify covered persons that they may incur out-of-pocket expenses for dental care services that are not covered services.
- Prohibits a contracting entity from requiring a dental care provider to accept a payment amount set by the contracting entity for dental care services that are not covered services.
- Designates a violation of these provisions an unfair and deceptive act in the business of insurance.
- Requires dental care providers to disclose pricing and certain other information for dental care services that are not covered services.
- Subjects providers who violate the act's disclosure requirements to professional discipline.

## **S.B. 56**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** September 20, 2024

- Enters Ohio as a party to the Interstate Massage Compact (IMpact), the purpose of which is to facilitate the interstate practice and regulation of massage therapy and improve public access to and safety of massage therapy services.
- As a member of IMpact, requires Ohio to allow a massage therapist licensed in another member state to practice in Ohio, subject to Ohio's laws and rules governing the practice of massage therapy.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding massage therapy licensees to the Commission's data system, including information related to licensure, adverse action, and the presence of investigative information.

## **S.B. 81**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Romanchuk

**Effective date:** September 20, 2024<sup>1</sup>

- Authorizes physician assistants, certified nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse midwives to sign documents related to the admission, treatment, and discharge of psychiatric inpatients, if certain conditions are met.
- Replaces the Board of Nursing’s Substance Use Disorder Monitoring Program with the Safe Haven Program, a program to be conducted by an organization under contract with the Board to monitor applicant and practitioner impairment resulting from substance use or mental or physical disability.
- Authorizes an insurance navigator to receive compensation from a health insurer offering insurance through an exchange operating in Ohio so long as the compensation is not in connection with enrollment in a qualified health benefit plan.

## **S.B. 90**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** August 9, 2024

- Enters Ohio into the Social Work Licensure Compact to facilitate the interstate practice of and improve public access to social work services by allowing social workers to practice in multiple states with a multistate license.
- As a member of the Compact, requires Ohio to extend the ability to practice to social workers with a multistate license from another member state of the Compact, subject to Ohio’s laws and rules governing social workers.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding social worker licensees to the Social Work Licensure Compact Commission’s data system, including information related to identification, licensure, investigations, and adverse action.

## **S.B. 106**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Schaffer

**Effective date:** June 12, 2024

- Requires, under certain conditions, the Administrator of Workers’ Compensation or a self-insuring public employer to pay for services used to determine whether a health care

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<sup>1</sup> S.B. 81 presents an amendment to the September 30, 2024, version of R.C. 4723.431. However, that version was repealed by H.B. 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, effective October 3, 2023. The earlier repeal supersedes the S.B. 81 amendment.

professional serving air ambulance patients sustained an injury or occupational disease after exposure to blood or bodily fluids or a drug or other chemical substance.

- Allows a workers' compensation claimant to provide a signed medical release form that is equivalent to the release form prepared by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, and permits the Bureau to adopt, rather than prepare, a form of its own.

## **S.B. 196**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Revises numerous laws to add references to certain advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and their authority to perform designated activities, often involving signing documents, in the same manner that the laws authorize physicians and other health professionals to perform the same activities.
- Revises the law governing APRN standard care arrangements, including by permitting a standard care arrangement to specify the actions that an APRN is authorized to take, or prohibited from taking, as part of the nurse's practice in collaboration with a physician.

## **S.B. 211**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Dietitian Licensure Compact**

- Enters Ohio as a party to the Dietitian Licensure Compact, the purpose of which is to facilitate the interstate practice of dietetics and improve public access to dietetics services.
- As a member of the Compact, requires Ohio to allow a dietitian licensed in another member state to practice in Ohio, subject to Ohio's laws and rules governing the practice of dietetics.
- Requires the State Medical Board to appoint a member to the Dietitian Licensure Compact Commission – a joint government agency created by the Compact to enforce the provisions and rules of the Compact.
- Requires Ohio to submit data regarding dietetics licensees to the Commission's data system, including information related to identification, examination, licensure, investigations, compact privilege, and adverse action.

### **9-8-8 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline**

- Adds 9-8-8 suicide and crisis response to the powers and duties of the Director of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

- Establishes a 9-8-8 Administrator within the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to oversee administration of the 9-8-8 Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Hotline System statewide.
- Requires the 9-8-8 Administrator to submit an annual report to the General Assembly and the Governor regarding the operation of the 9-8-8 Hotline in Ohio.
- Creates the 9-8-8 Fund in the state treasury, consisting of money from sources including appropriations from the General Assembly, to be used to oversee and administer the 9-8-8 Hotline.
- Exempts certain companies and affiliated individuals and entities from liability in a civil action for damages resulting from their acts or omissions in connection with the 9-8-8 Hotline.

# Environment and Natural Resources

## S.B. 156

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Reineke and Hackett

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

### Wild, scenic, and recreational rivers

- Transfers the authority to administer the Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Program from the Division of Parks and Watercraft to the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves (DNAP) in the Department of Natural Resources (ODNR).
- Narrows DNAP’s scope of authority granted under the law by clarifying that its authority is restricted to watercourses that are designated as wild, scenic, and recreational *rivers*, rather than wild, scenic, or recreational river *areas* as in former law.
- Clarifies that a watercourse designation does not affect private property rights or authorize the ODNR Director, DNAP Chief, or any governmental agency or political subdivision to restrict the use of private land adjacent to a designated river.
- Also specifies that the law does not give any right to those parties to enter on private land.
- Notwithstanding the general narrowing of authority, expands the types of watercourses that are subject to designation as a wild, scenic, or recreational river to include headwaters of those rivers.
- Alters what constitutes a wild, scenic, or recreational river to align those provisions of law to the general narrowing of authority granted to DNAP.
- Requires DNAP to perform specified duties regarding publicly owned land along a designated river, including requiring the DNAP Chief to both:
  - Adopt rules governing the use, visitation, and protection of scenic river lands and other specified publicly owned lands that are administered by DNAP and that are within the watersheds of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers; and
  - Provide for the establishment of facilities and improvements within the state system of wild, scenic, and recreational rivers, scenic river lands, and other specified publicly owned lands that are necessary for their visitation, use, restoration, and protection and that do not impair their natural character.
- Clarifies that certain public entities must obtain approval from the ODNR Director or the Director’s representative if specified construction activities are performed within 1,000 feet of a wild, scenic, or recreational river.

- Modifies the notification requirements when a river is designated a wild, scenic, or recreational river by requiring the Director to post the Director’s intention to declare a watercourse a wild, scenic, or recreational river on DNAP’s website.
- Clarifies the roles of the ODNR Director and the DNAP Chief, stipulating that the Director designates and the Chief administers the management of the designated wild, scenic, or recreational river.
- Allows the DNAP Chief to accept, receive, and spend gifts, devises, or bequests of money, land, or other properties for the Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Program.
- Eliminates the authority of the DNAP Chief to condition any expenditures, maintenance activities, or construction of facilities on the adoption and enforcement of adequate floodplain zoning or land use rules.
- Requires the DNAP Chief to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a biennial report of the status and condition of each wild, scenic, and recreational river and activities conducted within each river corridor.

### **Boating safety**

- Increases, from \$30,000 to \$60,000, the maximum annual grant that the Division of Parks and Watercraft may award to governmental entities and nonprofit organizations for boating safety education programs.
- Designates April as “Powerboat Safety Month” to emphasize the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning that can occur on a powerboat.

## Health

### H.B. 47

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Brown and Bird

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; appropriations effective July 23, 2024

#### **AEDs in schools and sports and recreation locations**

- Requires the placement of automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in:
  - Each public and chartered nonpublic school; and
  - Each municipal sports and recreation location, except in townships and villages with populations of less than 5,000.
- Modifies training requirements related to AEDs in public and chartered nonpublic schools.
- Requires the Department of Health to develop a model emergency action plan for the use of AEDs by public and chartered nonpublic schools, youth sports organizations, and municipal sports and recreation locations.
- Requires each public and chartered nonpublic school and youth sports organization, before each athletic season, to hold an informational meeting regarding the symptoms and warning signs of sudden cardiac arrest for student and youth athletes.

#### **Hospital provider relief payments**

- Appropriates \$5,453,600 in FY 2025 and requires these funds to be distributed to certain hospitals in a county with a population between 350,000 and 380,000 (Stark County).
- Prohibits any eligible hospital from receiving more than \$2,800,000.

### H.B. 173

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Troy

**Effective date:** April 3, 2025

#### **Availability of hospital price information**

- Requires each hospital to publish a list of all standard charges for all hospital items or services and a consumer-friendly list of standard charges for at least 300 of the hospital's shoppable services, including the services specified as shoppable services by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.
- Permits a hospital to fulfill the requirement for a list of standard charges for shoppable services instead by providing a qualifying internet-based price estimator tool.

- Prohibits a hospital that acquires an Ohioan’s personal data from its internet-based price estimator tool or from its price lists from selling the data or using or processing it for the purposes of targeted advertising.
- Requires the Director of Health to monitor each hospital’s compliance with the act’s requirements and in cases of noncompliance, to impose penalties, including fines, which must be deposited in the Hospital Price Transparency Fund created by the act.
- Requires the Director to publish a list of hospitals not in compliance with the price transparency requirements.
- Requires the Director to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor reports regarding noncompliant hospitals, changes to the federal price transparency law, and recommendations for changing state hospital price transparency requirements.

### **Special designations**

- Designates the week that includes March 16 as “Ohio Black Media Week.”
- Designates May as “Older Ohioans Month.”
- Designates October as “Hindu Heritage Month.”

## **H.B. 236**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. M. Miller and Lear

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Requires a congregate care setting to (1) inform a patient or resident that the patient or resident may designate an individual to serve as an advocate and (2) provide the patient or resident the opportunity to make the designation.
- Prohibits a congregate care setting – during any public health emergency or the period when a local or state public health order is in effect – from (1) denying a patient or resident access to an advocate and (2) prohibiting an advocate from being physically present with a patient or resident.
- Requires a congregate care setting, at all other times, to make every reasonable effort to allow the patient’s or resident’s advocate to be physically present with the patient or resident in the care setting.
- Prohibits an advocate from physically interfering with, delaying, or obstructing the delivery of health care and from engaging in criminal conduct against a staff member or health care practitioner.
- Grants a congregate care setting immunity from administrative or civil liability if the patient’s or resident’s advocate contracts an infectious disease, other than a foodborne disease, as a result of serving as the advocate.



- Grants an advocate the right under certain circumstances to quarantine with the patient at a congregate care setting that is a hospital or health care facility.
- Specifies that the act's provisions do not change or countermand any hospital or health care facility policy relating to the isolation of a patient during an invasive procedure.
- Specifies that the act's provisions do not prevent a congregate care setting from establishing a reasonable protocol governing the use of personal protective equipment, in the event a patient or resident has a highly infectious disease requiring special isolation procedures.
- Exempts an advocate from using personal protective equipment under the protocol if the advocate presents a practitioner's note documenting that the use conflicts with, or is not required because of, the advocate's own physical or mental health condition.
- Authorizes a patient, resident, and certain advocates to petition a court for injunctive relief for a violation or threatened violation of the act's provisions, and requires the court to grant a prevailing plaintiff court costs.
- Prohibits a political subdivision, public official, or state agency from issuing an order or rule that would require a care setting to violate the act's provisions.
- Requires the Department of Health to create a Never Alone information sheet and each congregate care setting to provide a patient or resident with a paper copy at the time of admission.
- Names the act the Never Alone Act.

## **H.B. 256**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. K. Miller and Creech

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Adds applying for a hunting or fishing license to the ways that a person may register to become an organ donor.
- Requires the Department of Natural Resources' Division of Wildlife and its authorized agents to ask an eligible person applying in person for a hunting or fishing license if the person would like to become an organ donor.
- Requires the Division and its authorized agents to register the eligible person as an organ donor in the organ donor registry maintained by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) if the person indicates approval for inclusion.
- Requires the Division to provide the organ donor registration form maintained by the BMV in mail applications for hunting and fishing licenses and to register those who return the application.

- Requires the Division to provide any person applying online for a hunting or fishing license who is willing to become an organ donor with an electronic hyperlink to the organ donor registry and include those who so register in the organ donor registry.
- Explicitly exempts the Division and authorized agents who issue hunting and fishing licenses from civil damages and prosecution for acting, attempting to act, or failing to act in accordance with the act's anatomical gift donor provisions.
- Delays implementation of the act's requirements until August 1, 2025.

## **S.B. 95**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Reynolds

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Remote dispensing pharmacies**

- Authorizes the operation of remote dispensing pharmacies and requires the State Board of Pharmacy to regulate them.
- Requires a remote dispensing pharmacy to be staffed by two or more pharmacy interns or certified pharmacy technicians and overseen and operated by both a supervising pharmacy and pharmacist through a telepharmacy system.
- Requires the Board to adopt rules governing the operation of remote dispensing pharmacies.

### **Mailing drugs to patients**

- Prohibits health plan issuers, pharmacy benefit managers, and other administrators from prohibiting a pharmacy from mailing or delivering drugs to patients as an ancillary service.

### **Pharmacist administration of injectable drugs**

- Authorizes a pharmacist to administer by injection the following drugs if prescribed by a physician and if other conditions specified in current law are met: HIV treatment drugs in long-acting or extended-release forms and any other drug specified in Board rules.

### **Pharmacy technician trainees**

- Authorizes the Board to register as a pharmacy technician trainee an applicant who is 17 years old and possesses a high school diploma or certificate of high school equivalence.

### **Certified mental health assistants**

- Establishes licensure by the State Medical Board for certified mental health assistants (CMHAs).
- Authorizes CMHAs to provide mental health care under the supervision, control, and direction of a physician with whom the CMHA has entered into a supervision agreement.

- Authorizes CMHAs to prescribe and personally furnish drugs and therapeutic devices in the exercise of physician-delegated prescriptive authority, including certain controlled substances.
- Specifies application procedures, including education requirements, renewal procedures, and continuing education requirements for CMHAs.
- Establishes within the Medical Board an advisory committee to advise it and the Department of Higher Education regarding CMHA education programs.
- Authorizes the Medical Board to discipline CMHAs in a manner similar to that of other Board licensees.
- Prohibits an individual from claiming to be able to function as a CMHA if that individual does not hold a CMHA license, and imposes criminal penalties for violations of that and other related prohibitions.

### **Uniform Duties to Incapacitated Persons Act**

- Modifies the law governing the use of medical identifying devices, including by recognizing devices containing bar or quick response codes that may be scanned to obtain medical information in an emergency.
- Names these provisions of the act “Paige’s Law.”

## **S.B. 144**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Romanchuk

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; appropriations effective July 25, 2024; one item vetoed

### **Pharmacist administration of immunizations**

- Authorizes certified pharmacy technicians and registered pharmacy technicians to administer immunizations in the same manner that pharmacy interns are authorized to do so under continuing law.
- Reduces, from age seven to age five, the youngest age group for whom pharmacists, interns, and technicians may administer immunizations.
- Eliminates a requirement that most immunizations for children under age 13 be prescribed in order to be administered by a pharmacist or pharmacy intern.

### **Medication aides**

- Limits the Board of Nursing’s certification of medication aides to those practicing in nursing homes and residential care facilities, by eliminating the Board’s authority to certify aides practicing in intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICFs/IID).

- Revises the law governing the Board’s approval of medication aide training programs, including by establishing a \$50 application fee and reducing, from 70 to 30, the hours of instruction that an approved program must provide.
- Specifies that medication aides are to be known as “certified medication aides” or “CMAs,” and requires the Board to maintain an online CMA registry.
- Recharacterizes the nursing oversight under which medication aides must work when administering medication as “supervision,” rather than “delegation” under former law, of a registered or licensed practical nurse.
- For as-needed medications, eliminates the requirement that a nursing assessment of the patient be completed before the medication is administered, and authorizes a medication aide to administer those medications regardless of whether the supervising nurse is present at the facility.
- Eliminates the prohibition on a medication aide administering schedule II controlled substances.
- Authorizes medication aides to administer insulin using an insulin pen device with a dosage indicator, but otherwise maintains the prohibition on their administering medications by injection.

### **Certified nurse aides**

- 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 a Board of Nursing-approved prelicensure program of nursing education and has passed the Board-accepted examination.
- Requires individuals listed on the Department of Health’s (ODH’s) nurse aide registry to be referred to as certified nurse aides, and permits only individuals in good standing on the registry to use the designation “certified nurse aide” or “CNA.”
- Eliminates the ODH Director’s authority to approve competency evaluation programs, but retains the Director’s authority to conduct the programs.
- Authorizes training and competency evaluation programs to conduct competency evaluations.
- Prohibits ODH rules from requiring a training and competency evaluation program instructor to have experience in a nursing home so long as the program coordinator supervising the program is a registered nurse with two years of nursing experience, including at least one year providing services in a nursing home or ICF/IID.

### **Nursing home quality improvement projects**

- Regarding the requirement that nursing homes participate in at least one quality improvement project every two years, requires priority to be given to projects that assist

with workforce, and makes it permissive instead of mandatory for nursing homes to consider projects on a Department of Aging-developed list.

### **Conditional employment – nursing homes and adult day-care**

- Extends from 30 days to 60 days the time that a nursing home or adult day-care program may conditionally employ an applicant while the applicant’s criminal records check results are pending.

### **Adult day-care grants**

- Reappropriates all remaining funds from item 042628, Adult Day Care, at the end of FYs 2023 and 2024 to the successive fiscal year, and requires all grants to be administered to adult day-care providers by December 31, 2024.

### **Certificates of need**

- Exempts a county with at least 60 fewer long-term care beds than the county’s bed need from a limitation that a county is considered not to need additional beds if its occupancy rate is less than 85%.
- Shortens, to every two years from every four years, the review cycle for (1) determinations of county long-term care bed supply and need and (2) certificate of need review.
- Permits the ODH Director to approve relocation of beds from a county only if the number of beds remaining in the county after the relocation will exceed the county’s bed need by at least 50 beds, as opposed to 100 beds under prior law.
- Eliminates a stipulation that permitted the Director to approve relocation of beds from a county only if the number of beds in the facility’s service area after the relocation is at least equal to the state bed need rate, and eliminates related provisions specifying a facility’s service area.
- Eliminates the requirement for comparative review if two certificate of need applications submitted during the same review period propose to relocate beds from the same service area and the number of beds left in the service area would be less than the state bed need rate.
- Eliminates the requirement that for an approved certificate of need, the long-term care facility from which beds were relocated must reduce the number of beds operated in the facility by at least 10% of the beds relocated.
- Related to the changes above, creates a one-time period of acceptance and review that begins April 24, 2025.

### **Nursing home change of operator**

- Replaces references to an “applicant” for a license to operate a nursing home following a change of operator with references to the “entering operator.”

- Removes a requirement that an application for a license to operate a nursing home following a change of operator disclose the owners with at least 5% ownership of a management firm or business employed to manage the nursing home.
- Specifies that the bond required as part of a change of operator license application may be supplied by either the entering operator or the owner of the nursing home.
- Establishes additional circumstances under which the ODH Director must deny a nursing home change of operator license application.
- Removes several actions undertaken by the owner of a nursing home as actions that constitute a change of operator of the nursing home.
- Requires the owner of a nursing home to provide written notice of specified information to the Department of Medicaid before a change of owner of a nursing facility may occur.
- Specifies that a nursing facility that undergoes a change of owner on July 1, 2023, or later is ineligible to receive a quality incentive payment for a specified period of time if, within one year of the change, there is an increase in the lease payments or other financial obligations of the operator to the owner.
- Requires, not later than October 24, 2025, that the identity of the operator holding a license to operate a nursing facility and the person holding the Medicaid provider agreement on record for the facility be the same person.

### **Medicaid payment rate for ICF/IID peer group 5**

- Eliminates the prohibition on the per Medicaid day payment rate for intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICFs/IID) in peer group 5 exceeding the payment rate for developmental centers that was in effect on July 1, 2013.
- Eliminates law that established fixed amounts for the (1) capital component costs, (2) direct care costs, (3) indirect care costs, and (4) other protected costs components for the per Medicaid day payment rate for new ICFs/IID in peer group 5.
- Specifies that for FY 2025, the per Medicaid day payment rate for ICFs/IID in peer group 5 is to be calculated in accordance with the act and the remaining provisions of continuing law regarding payments made to ICFs/IID.
- Specifies that if an ICF/IID in peer group 5 receives a per Medicaid day payment from the Department of Developmental Disabilities between July 1, 2024, and October 24, 2024, the Department must make a supplemental payment to the ICF/IID covering the difference between the amount paid and the amount required to be paid under the act.

### **Ohio Medical Quality Foundation (VETOED)**

- Would have repealed the statute that refers to the Ohio Medical Quality Foundation, which is organized as a nonprofit corporation, and would have directed the Foundation to transfer all of its unencumbered funds to the monitoring organization under contract with the State Medical Board (VETOED).

- Would have required the monitoring organization to use transferred funds for administering the confidential monitoring program for impaired practitioners licensed by, or seeking licensure with, the Medical Board (VETOED).

## **S.B. 234**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Gavarone

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Law enforcement and epinephrine autoinjectors**

- Authorizes a law enforcement agency or other entity served by peace officers to acquire and maintain epinephrine autoinjectors.
- Permits designated trained employees or agents of such an agency or entity to administer epinephrine, using an autoinjector, to an individual believed in good faith to be experiencing anaphylaxis.

### **National Suicide Lifeline telephone number**

- Requires schools and higher education institutions to include the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline telephone number, 9-8-8, on student identification cards, student planners, and electronic portals.
- Clarifies that this requirement is limited to those the school provides or issues after the act's effective date, and that the school may continue to use identification cards and planners that were printed before the act's effective date.

### **Information on declarations for mental health treatment**

- Requires institutions of higher education to provide information about declarations for mental health treatment as part of the institution's student orientation, onboarding, or transfer materials and programs.

### **Special designations**

- Designates May as Food Allergy Awareness Month and as Lupus Awareness Month.

# Highways and Transportation

## H.B. 77

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Willis

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### Use of an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)

#### Private use prohibitions

- Prohibits a person from operating a UAV as follows:
  - In a manner that knowingly endangers any person or property, or purposely disregards others' rights or safety;
  - If federal law or regulations prohibit its operation, unless the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has authorized the person to use the UAV;
  - In a manner that disrupts, interrupts, or impairs the operations or activities of law enforcement, fire departments, or emergency medical services; and
  - To photograph, record, or loiter over or near a critical facility with purpose to further another criminal offense that involves physical harm to another person or with purpose to destroy or tamper with the critical facility.

#### Local government use and regulation

- Subject to other federal and state laws regarding UAVs, authorizes a municipal corporation, township, park district, or county to adopt ordinances, resolutions, or regulations regarding both:
  - The use and operation of UAVs owned and operated by the local government; and
  - The use and operation of UAVs operated exclusively as a hobby or for recreational purposes in and above a park or other public property owned by the local government.

#### Office of Aviation responsibilities

- Requires the Office of Aviation to provide information and resources on its website regarding the use of UAVs and regarding what constitutes a critical facility.

#### Abandoned and derelict aircraft

- Authorizes a person to recoup unpaid storage costs from an aircraft owner by perfecting a lien on the aircraft.
- Establishes notification procedures that apply before the director of a public-use airport may perfect a lien on an abandoned aircraft for storage costs and for labor on or furnishing materials for the abandoned aircraft.



- Establishes a process to dispose of a derelict aircraft located on a public-use airport's property through either public auction or through an aircraft salvage or scrap metal dealer.
- Specifies that the derelict aircraft owner remains liable for any remaining costs, fees, and charges if the price of the aircraft does not cover the amount owed to the airport.
- Establishes a procedure for any excess proceeds from the disposal of a derelict aircraft to be distributed to other lienholders, the owner of the aircraft, or the Unclaimed Funds Trust Fund, as circumstances warrant.

## **H.B. 81**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Robb Blasdel and Jones

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Designates 57 memorial highways, bridges, and similar locations.

## **H.B. 107**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Patton

**Effective date:** March 14, 2025

- Designates the "Cleveland Firefighter Johnny Tetrick Memorial Highway" along a portion of I-90 in Cleveland and authorizes the Director of Transportation to erect suitable markers along the highway.

## **H.B. 202**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. J. Thomas

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Designates the eastbound and westbound lanes of U.S. Route 62 between Harmont Avenue N.E. and Rebar Avenue N.E. in the municipal corporation of Canton, Stark County, as the "Specialist Dennis Alan Combs Memorial Highway."

## **H.B. 251**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Pavliga

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Designates the northbound and southbound lanes of State Route 88 between Loomis Parkway and S.R. 14, in Portage County, as the "Patrolman James R. Wert Memorial Highway."
- Updates the name of one of the organizations receiving contributions from the "ALS Awareness" license plate from "ALS Association Northern Ohio Chapter" to "ALS Association."

## H.B. 253

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Upchurch and Holmes

**Effective date:** October 21, 2024

- Designates as the “Brigadier General Charles Young Memorial Historical Corridor” a passage along U.S. Routes 42, 68, and 62 from Wilberforce, Xenia Township, in Greene County, through Clinton and Brown counties to the Simon Kenton Bridge over the Ohio River.

## H.B. 269

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Holmes

**Effective date:** August 9, 2024

- Designates the “Sgt. Bradley J. Harper USMC Memorial Highway” along a portion of State Route 60 in Muskingum County.
- Updates the name of one of the organizations receiving contributions from the “ALS Awareness” license plate to “ALS United Ohio, Incorporated.”

## H.B. 403

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Cutrona

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### Civil actions related to towing

- Establishes a process for a commercial motor vehicle owner to file a civil action to dispute a towing service or storage facility’s charges related to that owner’s commercial motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property after a motor vehicle accident.
- Also authorizes a towing service or storage facility to file a civil action against a motor vehicle owner if all of the following apply:
  - The commercial motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property was removed, towed, or stored after a motor vehicle accident;
  - The owner has not paid the bill or filed a civil action to dispute the charges within 45 days of the owner receiving the bill; and
  - The towing service or storage facility is not attempting to take title to the motor vehicle until after any final judgments are entered for the current civil action.
- Requires a motor vehicle owner to pay the undisputed amount and to post a bond for the disputed amount of the towing service or storage facility’s charges.
- Requires the towing service or storage facility to release the commercial motor vehicle, cargo, or personal property within two business days after receipt of the undisputed amount.

- Requires the court to determine the reasonableness of the amount charged by the towing service or storage facility if that amount is in dispute.

### **Window tinting**

- Expands a law enforcement exemption to certain window tinting regulations and prohibitions.

### **Transportation network company background checks**

- Requires a transportation network company to conduct annual background checks on its authorized drivers and to terminate the authorization for a driver to work for the company if the background check reveals that the driver has committed a disqualifying offense.

### **Emission control tampering**

- Allows a motor vehicle dealer to sell a vehicle with an emission system that has been tampered with to another motor vehicle dealer through a motor vehicle auction under certain circumstances.

## **S.B. 163**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Kunze

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Creates 25 new specialty license plates.
- Modifies the law pertaining to three existing specialty plates: the American Legion, Ohio Carpenters, and Ohio Natural Energy Foundation license plates.

# Housing and Real Property

## H.B. 50

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Humphrey and Seitz

**Effective date:** September 20, 2024

### **Certificate of qualification for housing (CQH)**

#### **Petition**

- Allows an individual who is subject to collateral sanctions for housing as a result of being convicted of or pleading guilty to an offense to file a petition for a CQH.
- For a felony, allows an individual to file a CQH petition any time after the expiration of one year from the individual's release from incarceration or, if the individual was not incarcerated, any time after the expiration of one year from the individual's final release from all other sanctions imposed.
- For a misdemeanor, allows an individual to file a CQH petition any time after the expiration of six months from the individual's release from incarceration and all periods of supervision, or if the individual was not incarcerated, any time after the expiration of six months from the individual's final release from all other sanctions imposed.
- Requires that a CQH petition be accompanied by a \$50 filing fee, unless it is waived or partially waived by the court of common pleas.
- Requires a court that receives a petition for a CQH to provide notice to other courts in which the individual was convicted of or pleaded guilty to an offense and to the county's prosecuting attorney.
- Requires the court to review the petition for CQH and all other evidence.

#### **Issuance of CQH**

- Allows the court to issue a CQH if the court finds all of the following by a preponderance of the evidence:
  - Granting the petition will materially assist the individual in obtaining housing;
  - The individual has a substantial need for the requested relief in order to live a law abiding life;
  - Granting the petition would not pose an unreasonable risk to the safety of the public or any individual.
- Provides that an individual is rebuttably presumed to be eligible for a CQH if certain requirements are met.

### **Denial of petition**

- Requires that a petition that meets the requirements for the rebuttable presumption only be denied if the court rebuts the presumption and finds that the applicant has not been rehabilitated.
- Requires that if the court denies a petition for a CQH, the court must provide written notice to the individual of the denial.
- Specifies that if the court denies a petition for a CQH, the individual may appeal the decision to the court of appeals only if the individual alleges that the denial was an abuse of discretion.

### **Revocation of CQH**

- Requires that a CQH be revoked if the individual is convicted of or pleads guilty to a felony or a misdemeanor offense of violence committed after the CQH was issued.

### **Automatic bar to collateral sanctions**

- Provides that the issuance of a CQH lifts the automatic bar of a collateral sanction and the decision-maker must consider on a case-by-case basis whether to provide or deny housing.

### **Sex Offender Registration and Notification Law**

- Specifies that a CQH does not create relief from requirements imposed by and rules adopted under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Law.

### **Tort action**

- Provides that in a tort action, a CQH issued to an individual may be introduced as evidence of a decision-maker's due care in leasing to the individual if the decision-maker knew of the certificate at the time of the alleged negligence.
- Specifies that in a tort action against a decision-maker for negligent leasing, a CQH issued to an individual provides immunity to the decision-maker as to the claim if the decision-maker knew of the certificate at the time of the alleged negligence.
- Provides that if a lessee subsequently demonstrates dangerousness or is convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor offense of violence, and the decision-maker retains the individual as a lessee, the decision-maker may be held liable in a tort action based on the retention of the individual.

### **Liability for DRC or court**

- Provides that a court's issuance, or failure to issue, or the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's (DRC) or the Adult Parole Authority's (APA) issuance, or failure to issue a CQH does not give rise to claim of damages against DRC or the court.

### **PCS Division rules**

- Requires the Division of Parole and Community Services of DRC to adopt rules to implement and administer the act.

### **Private right of action**

- Specifies that its provisions do not create or provide a private right of action.

### **Tenant education, training, and readiness program**

- Requires that if DRC or the APA issues a certificate of achievement and employability to a prisoner, it also must issue the prisoner a CQH if the prisoner satisfactorily completes a tenant education, training, and readiness program approved by DRC.
- Provides that a CQH issued under the tenant education, training, and readiness program statute has the same effect as a CQH issued under the CQH statute.

### **Legal aid society funds**

- Revises the law prohibiting financial assistance received by legal aid societies from being used for the provision of legal services in any criminal case or proceeding or in the provision of legal assistance in any fee generating case.

### **Home construction services**

- Subjects contracts that exceed \$25,000 for repairs, improvements, remodels, or renovations of existing structures to the Home Construction Service Suppliers Act, instead of the Consumer Sales Practices Act.

### **Residential development land exemption**

- Modifies the application procedure for the residential development property tax exemption by requiring property owners to apply for the exemption with the county auditor, rather than the Tax Commissioner.
- Prohibits a school district from receiving notice of an application for the exemption and prohibits a school district or other third party from challenging such an exemption.

## **H.B. 466**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Schmidt and Brennan

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Requires written agency agreements for licensed brokers representing other parties in residential real estate transactions.

# Human Services

## H.B. 7

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. White and Humphrey

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Infant vitality supports**

- Requires the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) to conduct a study regarding the reimbursement of evidence-based peer-to-peer programming that supports infant vitality.

### **Help Me Grow**

- Revises the law governing Help Me Grow, including by requiring the Department of Children and Youth (DCY) to streamline its central intake and referral system to ensure that services are received from home visiting programs that are appropriate to each family's level of needs, such as the Early Head Start Home-Based Option.

### **WIC enrollment**

- Requires the Department of Health (ODH) to investigate the services and tools available at the federal level and implemented in other states to increase access to and use of the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- Requires ODH to submit a report to the General Assembly detailing the results of its investigation and establishing a plan to increase WIC access.
- Requires ODH to submit quarterly reports to the General Assembly for two years detailing progress on implementing its plan to increase WIC access.

### **Early childhood mental health services**

- Requires the Medicaid Director, by June 30, 2026, to evaluate and update the Medicaid program's coverage of evidence-based mental health and dyadic family therapy services for young children and their caregivers.
- Requires the Director to develop policy and billing guidance for Medicaid providers regarding the coverage.
- Requires the Director to submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly with specified information about the coverage.

### **Head Start and Step Up to Quality**

- Requires DCY to rate each licensed child day-care center and family day-care home operating a Head Start or Early Head Start program or a program accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in the Step Up to

Quality tier that DCY has determined corresponds with minimum Head Start or NAEYC standards.

### **Parenting programs**

- Requires DCY to develop strategies for state agencies to use in informing parents, caregivers, and child care providers about evidence-based parenting education programs, and to promote their benefits.

### **Ohio Commission on Fatherhood**

- Requires the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood to include in its annual report an evaluation of the outcomes of recommendations made by the Commission, and to submit the report to the General Assembly.



# Insurance

## S.B. 175

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Lang

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024; provisions related to pet insurance effective January 22, 2025

### Regulatory restrictions

- Exempts from the law requiring reductions in regulatory restrictions any rule required for a state agency's accreditation or certification from a multistate organization consisting of at least 45 participating states.

## Insurance

### Filing requirements

- Exempts commercial insurance policy forms and endorsements that are unique in character and designed for a particular risk from being filed with the Superintendent of Insurance.
- Modifies the process by which an insurer may use a rate greater than the rate on file with the Superintendent by eliminating the requirement that the Superintendent approve the higher rate.
- Requires the insurer to retain any insurance policy form, endorsement, or rate that is exempt from filing for three years after the policy's effective date, and make this information and supporting documentation available for inspection upon the Superintendent's request.

### Premiums tax

- Modifies the taxation of insurance premiums written for bail bonds.

### Electronic delivery of documents

- Permits a health benefit plan sponsor to agree to receive all communication related to the plan via electronic means.

### Claims on liquidated insurer's estate

- Adds funding agreements to the list of eligible claims on the assets of a liquidated insurer's estate.

### Ohio Fair Plan

- Removes certain requirements of the Ohio Fair Plan Underwriting Association.

### Ohio Assigned Risk Insurance Plan

- Prohibits making false and deceptive statements to the Ohio Assigned Risk Insurance Plan.

- Requires the Ohio Assigned Risk Insurance Plan to accept applications for insurance only from licensed insurance agents that are registered under the Plan.

### **Ohio Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association**

- Eliminates the requirement that a health insuring corporation include notice that it is not a member of the Ohio Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association in insurance contracts that are covered by the Association.

### **Confidentiality**

- Requires the Superintendent to maintain the confidentiality of information in connection with the merger or other acquisition of control of a domestic insurer.

### **Pet insurance**

- Creates a legal framework within which pet insurance may be sold, issued, and delivered.

### **Service of certain notices and documents**

- Eliminates requirements for the service of certain documents and notices and instead requires that they be served in accordance with Ohio's Administrative Procedure Act.

### **Professional employer organizations**

- Specifies that a professional employer organization (PEO) is the employer of shared employees co-employed by the PEO and a client employer when determining whether a PEO that sponsors a group health benefit plan is covered under Ohio's Small Employer Health Benefit Law.
- Specifies that Ohio's Small Employer Health Benefit Law does not apply to a fully insured health benefit plan sponsored by a PEO if the PEO is not a small employer for purposes of the law.

# Juvenile and Family Law

## H.B. 5

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Ray and Baker

**Effective date:** March 20, 2024

- Makes various changes to Ohio’s Adoption Law, including the following:
  - Permits a public children services agency (PCSA) or private child placing agency (PCPA) to accept the voluntary permanent surrender of a child by the child’s parents while the child is in the agency’s temporary custody;
  - Makes changes to the requirements governing who may adopt and requires spousal *consent* (instead of *support*) in certain cases;
  - Permits adult adoption of a person with a developmental disability (rather than solely an intellectual disability);
  - Makes various changes to provisions governing consent to adoption and when consent is not required;
  - Requires the court to apply the time a child has lived in the home of a relative, kinship caregiver, legal custodian, or guardian (in addition to the child’s foster caregiver in continuing law) who is adopting the child before that person filed the adoption period toward the six-month waiting period required before an adoption is final;
  - Requires the court to notify any agency with permanent custody of the child to be adopted of an adoption petition filing and the adoption hearing;
  - Revises the language required in notices of the filing of an adoption petition and to certain requirements of adoption proceedings regarding closed hearings and recordkeeping;
  - Increases from \$3,000 to \$6,000 the maximum amount that an adoption petitioner may disburse to the birth mother for living expenses incurred during pregnancy;
  - Permits a court to reconsider and vacate the adoption decree of a child if there is clear and convincing evidence the child was a victim of trafficking in persons;
  - Makes various other changes regarding the issuance and appeal of adoption decrees;
  - Allows for a foreign decree of adoption to be accepted and considered final in Ohio if certain conditions are met, rather than requiring the adoptive parent to petition the court for finalization;
  - Applies the best interest factors set forth in the law governing contested adoptions to other Adoption Law provisions where “best interest” was not defined;
  - Adds and removes adoptions by certain individuals (e.g., by a child’s adult sibling or grandparent) as being exempt from aspects of the adoption procedure.

# Local Government

## H.B. 101

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Bird and Schmidt

**Effective date:** April 30, 2024; appropriations effective January 30, 2024; certain provisions effective January 1, 2025

### Village dissolution

- Restricts a vote on the question of a village's dissolution to general elections held in even-numbered years.
- Modifies the process for winding up the affairs of a dissolved village as follows:
  - Requires a Transition Supervisory Board to be established to supervise the various aspects of the transition.
  - Requires the appointment of a receiver-trustee to perform certain duties including collection of taxes, resolution of debts, distribution of property, continuity of utility services, handling public records requests, and other matters.
  - Requires former village officials to assist the Board.

### Geauga County prosecuting attorney

- Requires the Geauga County prosecuting attorney to prosecute all violations of state law arising within the unincorporated areas of Geauga County.

### Competitive bidding

- Increases the competitive bidding threshold to \$75,000 for villages and park districts.

### Large Settlements and Awards Fund

- Creates a Large Settlements and Awards Fund and directs to the fund all money collected or received by the Attorney General from any court order, judgment, settlement, or compromise exceeding \$5 million.

### Reporting election results

- Requires boards of elections and the Secretary of State to transmit election results, including those of county court judge and municipal court judge, to the Administrative Director of the Supreme Court by email or other telecommunication device.
- Requires election results on the Governor, members of Congress, and others to be emailed to the Senate President, rather than mailed.

### F-9 liquor permits

- Modifies eligibility for an F-9 permit as follows:

- Eliminates the law restricting the permits to Franklin County;
- Expands the eligible applicants to include a nonprofit that provides or manages entertainment programming at a municipal park under an agreement with the municipal corporation that owns the park; and
- Eliminates the restriction that the park property be the subject of an agreement between various entities for hosting art or orchestral performances.
- Allows a person to possess an opened container of beer or intoxicating liquor that has been lawfully purchased for on-premises consumption from an F-9 permit holder.
- Continues to allow a person to possess on an F-9 permit premises a container of beer or intoxicating liquor that was not purchased from an F-9 permit holder with the permit holder's permission, but eliminates qualifications that a person could do so only if certain conditions applied, including attending a free art or music performance.

### **Treasurer of State**

- Exempts from the Public Records Law certain records related to the linked deposit programs from the Treasurer of State and participating financial institutions.
- Specifies the termination date for public depositories designated on or around July 4, 2022, is Sunday, July 6, 2025.

### **Primary and secondary education**

- Increases the minimum state share percentage for joint vocational school districts from 5% to 10% for FY 2024 and FY 2025.
- Qualifies a child for the Autism Scholarship Program if, in addition to other requirements, the child is eligible to enter school in any of grades preschool through 12.
- Clarifies that projects that received conditional approval from the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission during 2023 are subject to the recently expanded 16-month window during which voters must approve bonds and tax levies.
- Maintains school districts' and community schools' authority to employ an educator to teach outside of the educator's designated grade band beyond 2023.
- Clarifies that the State Board of Education, rather than the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW), is responsible for criminal records checks and RAPBACK enrollment of pre-service teaching permit holders.
- Requires DEW, rather than the State Board, to adopt and update reading competencies for all reading credentials and training.
- Removes the DEW Director from the Educator Standards Board and its subcommittees.
- Makes corrective changes related to the establishment of DEW and the transfer of State Board's and Superintendent of Public Instruction's powers and duties.

## Higher education

- Exempts private, nonprofit colleges and universities from posting on their websites that students have a right to access transcripts for the purpose of seeking employment, regardless of whether they owe an institutional debt.
- Abolishes the Center for Civics, Culture, and Society at the University of Cincinnati.
- Establishes a Center for Civics, Culture, and Workforce Development at Wright State University.
- Transfers from the University of Cincinnati to Wright State a \$2 million earmark to support the Center.

## Preschool and school child programs

- Revises the law effective January 1, 2025, governing minimum standards for licensed preschool and school child programs, including by requiring the Department of Children and Youth to adopt those standards in rule, rather than to do so jointly with the DEW Director.

## STRS membership for pre-service teaching

- Includes, as State Teachers Retirement System members, student teachers who hold pre-service teacher permits and are employed as substitute teachers, and excludes them from School Employees Retirement System membership.

## Doula services

- Modifies recently enacted law establishing doula certification by the Board of Nursing and creating a Medicaid program to cover doula services, including by requiring applicants for doula certification to undergo a criminal records check.
- Renames the Doula Advisory Board as the Doula Advisory Group, revises its membership, and requires it to submit annual reports to the General Assembly beginning in 2026.

## Respiratory care applicants' information

- Eliminates the requirement that the State Medical Board's register of applicants and licensees show the residential address of applicants to practice respiratory care.

## 9-1-1 charges and fees

- Applies the next generation 9-1-1 access fee to wireless service priced under \$5 per month.
- Modifies the payment sources for refunds of wireless 9-1-1 charges and next generation 9-1-1 access fees.

## Tax law

- Makes clarifying changes to a recently enacted income tax deduction for contributions to homeownership savings accounts.

- Makes technical corrections to various tax laws that were amended or enacted in H.B. 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the main appropriations act.

### **Other appropriations**

- Appropriates \$1.6 million in FY 2024 and \$1.25 million in FY 2025 from the General Revenue Fund (GRF) to the Department of Natural Resources for the Buckeye State Tree Nursery.
- Reappropriates for FY 2025 any funds remaining of the \$15 million appropriated from GRF for FYs 2022, 2023, and 2024 for one-time payments to freestanding dialysis centers.
- Increases the cap on State Public Defender reimbursements for capital cases from \$75 to \$140 per hour in FYs 2024 and 2025.
- Corrects drafting errors in the appropriations for the Department of Development in H.B. 33 of the 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

## **H.B. 315**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Hall and Seitz

**Effective date:** April 3, 2025; appropriations effective January 2, 2025; certain provisions effective July 1, 2025; contains item vetoes

### **Township law**

- Specifies which body serves as the organizational board of commissioners of a new community authority if more than one body is eligible.
- Authorizes townships to impose a “protect and serve charge” of up to \$1 on admissions to certain event venues in the township to fund police, fire, and emergency medical services.
- Modifies various township newspaper publication requirements to allow publication via the print or digital edition of a newspaper of general circulation, the official public notice website, or the township’s website and social media account.
- Eliminates the requirement that the county prosecutor approve specifications of fire equipment.
- Specifies that boards of township trustees’ emergency powers include emergencies due to a natural disaster, civil unrest, cyber attack, or the derailment of a train.
- Eliminates a requirement that each township provide its fiscal officer with a book for the record of marks and brands.
- Repeals law requiring townships to obtain the voter approval before constructing or improving a town hall above a certain cost (currently \$75,000).
- Allows townships to establish township preservation commissions.

- Establishes a civil enforcement process for the resolution of zoning violations and the collection of zoning fines.
- Requires a permanent license plate issued to a township to display the term “township” in bold letters.
- Allows a township to use general funds to pay for machinery, tools, material, and labor used in constructing, reconstructing, maintaining, or repairing roads and culverts.

### **Municipal forestry assessments**

- Allows a municipal corporation, by ordinance, to provide 501(c)(3) nonprofit entities with an exemption from special assessments assessed for managing shade trees in public rights-of-way and along the streets of the municipal corporation.

### **Extension of certain township TIFs**

- Allows a township to extend the life of an existing tax increment financing (TIF) district created before 2006 for up to 15 years if certain conditions are met.

### **County engineer**

- Allows a board of county commissioners, when the office of county engineer is vacant, to contract with another county’s engineer to perform the duties of county engineer in that county, and gives the county engineer supplemental compensation for doing so.
- Prohibits a county engineer from engaging in the private practice of engineering or surveying in a county in which the person is the county engineer or acting county engineer.
- Eliminates the compensation schedule that applies to county engineers with a private practice, and instead subjects all county engineers to the compensation schedule for county engineers without a private practice.

### **County creation of additional port authority**

- Allows a county that is included in an existing port authority to create a new port authority if the existing one has jurisdiction in more than one county and the county creating the port authority has a population of 100,000 or less.

### **Digital publication of notices**

- Requires a publisher to establish a government rate for posting legal advertisements, notices, and proclamations that are required by law to be published, in a newspaper of general circulation’s digital edition on the newspaper’s website.

### **Video public records**

- Authorizes a state or local law enforcement agency to include in its public records policy the requirement that a requester pay the estimated actual cost before beginning the process of preparing a video record for inspection or production.



- Specifies that the agency may charge the actual cost, not to exceed \$75 per hour of video produced, nor \$750 total.

### **Community action agencies**

- Requires a nonprofit agency or organization designated as a community action agency to be incorporated under Ohio's nonprofit incorporation laws.
- Exempts a nonprofit agency or organization, which has been designated as a community action agency by the Community Services Division of the Department of Development, from the requirements of Ohio Open Meetings Law and specifies that the agency is not a state agency or public office.
- Requires that the written operating procedures of a community action agency specify methods by which the board may conduct meetings using virtual electronic technology, and that the board may provide notice of its meetings by any means deemed appropriate.

### **Ethics law and village mayors (VETOED)**

- Would have exempted village mayors from the prohibition on having an unlawful interest in a public contract under certain circumstances. (VETOED)

### **Recreation boards**

- Specifies that automated external defibrillators must be placed in each sports and recreation location at any time that the location is hosting an organized youth sport activity.

### **Designated public service workers**

- Allows a judge and a prosecuting attorney to submit an affidavit to have their name removed from the general tax list and duplicate of real and public utility property.

### **Common pleas and municipal court clerks (VETOED)**

- Would have required elected clerks of the common pleas court or municipal court to determine the best means and methods for storing, maintaining, and retrieving all papers delivered to the clerk in compliance with existing court rules (VETOED).

### **Electronic license applications**

- Requires a state department, agency, or office that issues a license or another authorization to a person to practice a trade or profession to require applicants to apply through an electronic licensing system.
- Permits a department, agency, or office to adopt a policy allowing an applicant to apply for a license or another authorization using a paper application.

### **Notaries**

- Requires a notary to take the oath of office in person.

- Modifies and reorganizes the law governing disciplinary actions by the Secretary of State (SOS) upon allegations of notary misconduct, including by eliminating the administrative hearing requirement and prohibiting the reappointment of any notary whose commission is revoked.
- Requires electronic submission of requests for a duplicate or amended commission.
- Revises the information required to be included in the notary database maintained by the SOS.
- Increases the maximum fee for online notarization from \$25 to \$30, and authorizes online notaries to charge an additional \$10 technology fee for use of an identity verification process.
- Reorganizes the law concerning notarial certificates provided by non-notaries (like judges) who are authorized to perform notarial acts.
- Reorganizes the law concerning the execution of an acknowledgment and specifies the meaning of an acknowledgment executed on behalf of a Limited Liability Company (LLC).
- Expounds upon the standard for determining if a notary has “personal knowledge” or “satisfactory evidence” for verifying the identity of a person making an acknowledgment or jurat, or the validity of that person’s signature.
- Specifies that notaries have statewide jurisdiction and consolidates the list of notarial acts that a notary or other authorized person may perform.
- Specifies the form of an oath or affirmation given by a notary to a person signing a jurat.
- Expands the list of county government officials that are required to accept electronically notarized documents to include clerks of courts and deputy registrars.
- Specifies that a notary commission is not an occupational or professional license for purposes of the state’s occupational regulation laws.

### **Limited liability companies (LLCs)**

- Requires the SOS to charge a \$50 filing fee for an LLC statement of authority, an amendment or cancellation of a statement of authority, or a denial of a statement of authority.
- Eliminates the \$50 filing fee for certificates of correction concerning the registration or assumed name of a foreign LLC.
- Requires a certificate of merger to include the name and mailing address of the person or entity that will provide a copy of the merger agreement to shareholders, partners, or equity holders of a constituent entity.

## **Compensation for intercollegiate student-athletes**

- Authorizes an institution of higher education (a state institution of higher education or a private college) to compensate a student-athlete for use of the student-athlete's name, image, or likeness (NIL).
- Specifies that student-athletes are not an institution's employee because the institution compensates them for use of their NIL.
- Prohibits a student-athlete from using specified property belonging to an institution to further opportunities for the student-athlete to earn NIL compensation, unless authorized by the institution.
- Authorizes an institution to provide money, resources, or other benefits to an institutional marketing associate or third-party entity to incentivize it to facilitate opportunities for student-athletes to earn NIL compensation.
- Prohibits an institution, athletic association, conference, or other group or organization with authority over intercollegiate athletics from taking specified actions regarding a student-athlete for obtaining representation from an athlete agent or attorney or for earning NIL compensation or any other athletics-related compensation.
- Designates as confidential and not a public record under the Public Records Law any contract or proposed contract providing a student-athlete with NIL compensation that is disclosed to an institution as required by law.
- Authorizes student-athletes, institutions, institutional marketing associates, and third-party entities to sue for violations of the act, and provides immunity to employees of institutions, associates, and entities for damages resulting from a student-athlete's inability to earn NIL compensation.
- Prohibits a student-athlete under age 18 from entering into a contract that provides the student-athlete with NIL compensation unless the contract includes the written consent of the student-athlete's parent, guardian, or custodian.

## **Historic rehabilitation tax credit**

- Prohibits the Department of Development, in awarding a historic rehabilitation tax credit, from considering whether a project will benefit an economically distressed area.

## **Opportunity zone investment tax credit**

- Allows the tax credit for investments in Ohio opportunity zones to be claimed against the financial institutions tax or domestic or foreign insurance company tax.

## **Sales tax exemption: sports facilities**

- Expands a sales tax exemption for construction materials incorporated into the construction of a professional sports facility to apply to any subsequent construction and to include other tangible personal property incorporated into its construction.

- Authorizes the team-owning lessee of a county-owned sports facility to sign the exemption certificate, on behalf of the county, to claim the exemption.

### **Commercial activity tax situsing for motor vehicles**

- Situses receipts to Ohio from the sale or lease of a motor vehicle by a dealer, for commercial activity tax (CAT) purposes, only if a certificate of title with an Ohio address is issued for that vehicle.
- Applies the situsing provision retrospectively and prospectively to all tax periods.

### **Sales and use tax on delivery network services**

- Allows a company that coordinates delivery of goods between customers and local businesses to obtain a waiver from the requirement that it collect and remit sales or use tax on the goods as if it were the seller.
- Subjects the delivery charges of a company that has obtained a waiver to sales or use tax, thus requiring the company to collect and remit tax on its delivery services but not the cost of goods delivered.

### **Transfer of properties subject to tax foreclosure**

- Imposes new requirements on the direct transfer of abandoned, tax-foreclosed property to a land bank or political subdivision without a foreclosure sale.

### **CAUV: land subject to state conservation easements**

- Allows farmland to continue to be valued at its current agricultural use value (CAUV) for property tax purposes if the land becomes subject to a water conservation project funded by the H2Ohio program.
- Allows property owners whose land did not qualify for CAUV for tax year 2023 or 2024, but would have under the act, to apply for a refund.

### **Excess funds in foreclosure sales**

- Requires the officer that conducts a property foreclosure sale, including a tax foreclosure sale, to deliver any excess funds to the clerk of court not later than 45 days after the confirmation of sale.
- Authorizes the clerk, in certain circumstances, to notify the judgment debtor of excess funds by posting notice on the clerk's website, sending a text message, or posting the notice in a conspicuous place in the court where the foreclosure action commenced.
- Increases from 60 to 90 days the time within which the clerk of court must give excess funds in a tax foreclosure sale to the county treasurer.

### **Brownfield Remediation Program**

- Eliminates procedures for designating a county lead entity under the Brownfield Remediation Program, and, instead, revises what is considered a lead entity by both:

- Eliminating the stipulation that a lead entity must be a grant award recipient and the responsible party with whom the Department of Development executes a grant agreement for grant funds; and
- Clarifying that a lead entity means a county, township, municipal corporation, port authority, conservancy district, park district or other similar park authority, county land reutilization corporation, or organization for profit.
- Regarding the law that allows money appropriated to counties that is unspent after a calendar year to be made available for grants statewide on a first-come, first-served basis, eliminates the requirement that those grants be limited to 75% of a qualifying project's total cost.
- Delays the effective date of these changes until July 1, 2025.

### **Conservancy district charitable and social welfare trusts**

- Allows the board of directors of a conservancy district that includes all or parts of more than 16 counties to both:
  - Establish a charitable trust, social welfare trust, or both, that meets certain requirements, to benefit the conservancy district and the purposes for which the district was created, in perpetuity;
  - Use surplus money in its maintenance fund, other than proceeds derived from the levy of maintenance assessments, to provide financial support to a conservancy district charitable trust or social welfare trust.
- Establishes requirements for the instrument creating a conservancy district charitable trust or social welfare trust and documents evidencing payment and receipt of financial support by the trusts.
- Exempts conservancy district charitable trusts and social welfare trusts from the Public Records Law and from being considered a "subdivision" under the uniform depository act.
- Exempts conservancy district charitable trusts and social welfare trusts from:
  - Various charitable trust oversight powers granted to the Attorney General, including authority for the Attorney General to investigate trustees of charitable trusts;
  - General law governing the incorporation and administration of charitable trusts.
- Exempts money in a conservancy district charitable trust and social welfare trust and money received for them from the meaning of "public moneys" under the uniform depository act.
- Adds rents, incomes, royalties, and other revenues received from the use of the conservancy district's lands to the conservancy district maintenance fund.
- Increases statutory competitive bidding thresholds from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for conservancy districts and, starting in 2025, increases the threshold amount by 3% each year.

## Homebuyer Protection Act

- Requires the Superintendent of the Division of Real Estate and Professional Licensing to adopt rules that require a real estate broker or salesperson to provide the seller a second disclosure of laws that relate to anti-discrimination in the home-buying process and the penalties for violating those laws.
- Prohibits the real estate broker or salesperson from marketing or showing a seller's home before providing the disclosure form to, and receiving a signed and dated copy from the seller.
- Authorizes the Superintendent to enforce the act's provisions.
- Exempts the rules from the law concerning reduction of regulatory restrictions.
- Names the disclosure mandate the "Homebuyer Protection Act."

## Public utility costs classified as regulatory assets

### Governmental entity right-of-way regulation costs

- Adds to those costs for which a public utility subject to the Public Utilities Commission (PUCO) jurisdiction may file an application with PUCO for accounting authority to classify them as a regulatory asset, a cost that is directly incurred on or after April 3, 2025, due to a "governmental entity" regulation of the utility's occupancy or use of a "right-of-way."
- Defines "governmental entity" as a state agency or political subdivision that is not a municipal corporation and a "right-of-way" as land designated for public use that is owned or controlled by a governmental entity and is not a private easement and includes a municipal corporation public way.
- Requires PUCO to process applications for classifying governmental entity public way regulation costs as regulatory assets in the same manner as applications for the recovery of municipal public way regulation costs as regulatory assets.
- Requires PUCO to authorize such accounting authority as may be reasonably necessary to classify the cost as a regulatory asset.
- Requires PUCO to establish a charge and collection mechanism permitting the utility's full recovery of a regulatory asset described above if treatment of the cost as a regulatory asset is determined to not be practical or if deferred recovery would impose a hardship on the utility or its customers.
- Exempts cost recovery authorized as a regulatory asset as described above from any provision of law or agreement establishing price caps, rate freezes, or rate increase moratoria.

### Municipal public way regulation costs

- Clarifies that a public utility may apply to PUCO for accounting authority to classify, as regulatory assets, its costs related to the use or occupancy of a municipal public way and

incurred as a result of municipal corporation regulation (instead of local regulation as in former law) of its use or occupancy.

## **Waste energy recovery systems**

- Includes as a “waste energy recovery system,” under several provisions of electric utility law, a facility that produces and uses steam, or transfers it, from recovered waste heat from a manufacturing process to another manufacturing process or to generate electricity.

## **Underground Technical Committee**

- Adds an OHIO811 nonvoting advisory member to the Underground Technical Committee (UTC), who is not counted for determining whether a quorum is present and the number of votes necessary to constitute a majority for the UTC to take action.
- Requires the OHIO811 member to be appointed by the Governor to a four-year term, and the first Ohio811 member to be appointed by June 2, 2025.
- Requires the OHIO811 member to assist and provide certain information regarding the Ohio underground protection service law and processes to the UTC.

## **Post-release employment assistance**

### **State identification cards**

- Requires the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) and the Department of Youth Services (DYS) to make available and submit completed applications for state identification cards or temporary identification cards (“ID card”) on behalf of individuals in their custody.
- Requires DRC and DYS to initiate the application process within the nine months prior to an individual’s release if the individual is serving a sentence more than one year, or within a reasonable time if the individual is serving a sentence less than one year.
- Authorizes the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to create a process by which DRC and DYS may submit the applications.
- Eliminates the identification cards issued by DRC and DYS that were used by individuals to obtain an ID card issued by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).
- Specifies that the ID cards issued by the BMV to residents in the custody of DRC or DYS are free.
- Delays the administrative implementation of the ID card requirements by 18 months.

### **Employment-related documents**

- Requires DRC, if resources or third-party assistance is available, to provide every inmate released from prison who committed a felony offense, who intends to live in Ohio, with documentation to assist the inmate in obtaining post-release employment, creating a resume, and conducting a practice job interview.

- Exempts certain inmates from being required to complete resumes or practice job interviews prior to release from incarceration, including those who decline to participate.

## **Cooperative economic development agreements**

- Allows, under certain conditions, a cooperative economic development agreement (CEDA) to include a new type of agreement that would allow a political subdivision's regulations to apply within territory wherein the regulations would not otherwise apply.
- Specifically includes road and bridge improvements and regulations as types of government improvements and services that CEDAs should be liberally construed to allow.
- Specifies that nothing in the CEDA law expands or diminishes the exception of public utilities from certain regulations.

## **Insurance coverage**

### **Occupational therapy, physical therapy, and chiropractic services**

- Prohibits a health benefit plan from imposing cost sharing for occupational therapy, physical therapy, or chiropractic services that exceeds the cost sharing for an office visit to a primary care physician or osteopath physician.
- Requires a health plan issuer to clearly state on its website and on all relevant literature that coverage for occupational therapy, physical therapy, and chiropractic services is available along with any limitations.
- Designates a violation of these provisions an unfair and deceptive practice in the business of insurance.

### **Hearing aids**

- Requires health plan issuers to cover hearing aids and related services for persons 21 and younger.
- Names the requirement "Madeline's Law."

## **Residential facilities for foster children**

- Enacts law that applies to residential facilities for foster children operated by public children services agencies (PCSAs), private child placing agencies (PCPAs), private noncustodial agencies, or superintendents of county or district children's homes, including:
  - Notification requirements when a child under a residential facility's care and supervision presents to an emergency department or hospital for an injury or mental health crisis or has an interaction with a law enforcement officer;
  - A requirement that residential facilities, PCSAs, and PCPAs have 24-hour emergency on-call procedures for purposes of those notifications;



- Mandatory monthly visits by a PCSA or PCPA to check on the well-being of a child under a residential facility's care and supervision;
- Circumstances that require a PCSA or PCPA to review a child's residential facility placement;
- PCSA and PCPA oversight of services provided by community organizations to a child under a residential facility's care and supervision;
- Notification requirements regarding delinquent children placed in a residential facility;
- Certification requirements, including site visits at least annually, compliance with local planning and zoning requirements, and notifications to the local authorities;
- Mandatory criminal records checks for employment or appointment in a residential facility, including conditional employment while a records check is pending if authorized by the federal government;
- Various rulemaking and reporting requirements regarding Department of Children and Youth (DCY) oversight of residential facilities in Ohio, including:
  - ❖ Determining and establishing incentives to attract residential facilities to underserved regions;
  - ❖ Establishing a procedure for individuals to communicate concerns about residential facilities;
  - ❖ Conducting surveys of residential facility, PCSA, and PCPA staff about those facilities;
  - ❖ Reviewing reports, concerns and complaints about residential facilities it receives under the act;
  - ❖ Reviewing and updating training requirements for residential facility staff.
- Creates the Study Committee to Evaluate the Placement of Delinquent Children in Residential Facilities to evaluate, make recommendations, and issue a report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

## **Educational stability of foster children**

- Requires the Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) to provide all school districts with best practices to help ensure the educational stability of students who are in a PCSA or PCPA's custody.
- Requires the school district in which a foster child is enrolled after being placed in a residential facility to assess the needs of the child for appropriate services and interventions and to use the results to make recommendations regarding the child.
- Requires DCY and DEW to create a standard form for PCSAs and PCPAs to convey to school district foster care liaisons information necessary to support the education of children in their custody.

## **Peace officer training**

- Requires the Attorney General, in consultation with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission, to adopt rules governing the training of peace officers in identifying and interacting with at-risk youth.

## **Medical free speech and opinions (VETOED)**

- Would have prohibited an administrative or disciplinary action against a licensed health care professional, hospital, or inpatient facility for expressing a medical opinion that does not align with those of the licensing board, a local board of health, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), or another health authority (VETOED).
- Would have prohibited the licensing board and ODH from infringing on medical free speech (VETOED).

## **Denial of fluids and nutrition**

- Generally prohibits the denial of fluids or nutrition to a hospital or inpatient facility patient.

## **World Health Organization**

- Specifies that the World Health Organization lacks jurisdiction in Ohio.
- Prohibits a political subdivision, public official, or state agency from enforcing or using any state funding to implement or incentivize any guideline, mandate, recommendations, or rule issued by the World Health Organization, in particular, one that prohibits issuing a prescription for, or dispensing a drug, including an off-label drug.

## **Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Ohio Advisory Board**

- Establishes the 12-member Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Ohio Advisory Board to coordinate the mission of the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library in the state.

## **Specialty license plates**

- Creates the “St. Vincent-St. Mary High School” and “Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library” specialty license plates.

## **Ukraine Independence Day**

- Designates August 24 as Ukraine Independence Day in Ohio.

## **Appropriations**

- Expands the authorized uses of the Auditor of State’s fiscal distress services appropriation line item to supporting costs incurred by the Auditor for colleges or universities in or at risk of entering a state of fiscal caution, watch, or emergency.
- Appropriates \$1.5 million to the Department of Development for FY 2025 grants to townships seeking to modernize regulations and processes tied to zoning.

- Appropriates \$1 million for FY 2025 to the Indigent Burial and Cremation Support Program.

## **H.B. 331**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Mathews and T. Young

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Creates a new pathway to village dissolution by doing the following:
  - Requiring each county, about every ten years, to evaluate the villages located within the county to determine if the village is providing sufficient services and fielding candidates for all elected village offices.
  - Requiring the question of dissolution to be placed on the ballot if these factors are not satisfied.
- Modifies asset forfeiture notice publication requirements to allow publication via the print or digital edition of a newspaper of general circulation, the official public notice website, or via the township's website and social media account.
- Requires a publisher to establish a government rate for posting legal advertisements, notices, and proclamations that are required by law to be published, in a newspaper of general circulation's digital edition on the newspaper's website.

## **H.B. 497**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Stewart and Klopfenstein

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **County law**

- Allows counties to designate additional public depositories of active moneys during the four-year designation period.
- Exempts county improvement projects for minor repairs from the requirement to obtain detailed plans, bills, specifications, and cost estimates from an architect or engineer.
- Modifies the approval process for county courthouse and jail projects with an estimated cost of \$75,000 or less.
- Increases, from \$1,000 to \$20,000, the threshold at which a county prosecutor is required to approve contracts related to county improvements.
- Requires plans and specifications related to county improvements, county homes, and county children's homes to be kept on file with the county commissioners instead of the county auditor.
- Requires plans and specifications related to county bridges to be kept by the county engineer instead of the county auditor.

- Simplifies the process a county must follow to donate unneeded property.
- Increases threshold amounts, from \$50,000 to \$75,000, related to the county notice requirement for purchases, leases, and construction contracts, and related to guaranty and bonding requirements for county contracts.
- Prohibits a contract entered into by a county for the procurement of goods or services from including certain terms and conditions.
- Allows a county prosecutor to provide legal services to a transportation improvement district.
- Specifies that any court cost, fine, restitution, or other monetary penalty imposed at the time of a transfer to the juvenile court of the child's residence is not a final, appealable order.
- Permits a county records commission to meet at the call of the chair rather than at least every six months.

### **Public notice requirements**

- Requires a publisher to establish a government rate for posting legal advertisements, notices, and proclamations that are required by law to be published, in a newspaper of general circulation's digital edition on the newspaper's website.
- Permits a county to publish required county advertisements in only the digital edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the county, or only on the county's website and social media account.

### **Coroner**

- Authorizes a coroner to deny a journalist access to preliminary autopsy and investigative notes and findings, photographs taken by a coroner, and suicide notes.
- Requires health care workers who obtain knowledge related to an individual's suspicious or unusual death, including criminal and violent deaths, suicides, and deaths of individuals with developmental disabilities, to immediately notify the coroner of those facts.
- Specifies that autopsy costs include any component of an autopsy, as well as costs to transport the body.
- Establishes new eligibility requirements for the office of coroner, with exceptions for those in office as of April 9, 2025.
- Defines "private practice of medicine" for purposes of coroner compensation and specifies that it includes performing an autopsy at the request of another coroner, a hospital, a business entity, an institution of higher education, or any other person.
- Establishes a \$350 per hour fee for a coroner for time spent preparing for and giving expert testimony at a trial, hearing, or deposition in a civil action.

- Requires that collaboration agreements between advanced practice registered nurses and collaborating physicians, and supervision agreements between physician assistants and supervising physicians, contain an agreement that the physician must complete and sign the medical certificate of death.

### **Land conveyances**

- Authorizes the conveyance of certain state-owned land in Monroe Township to the Knox County Park District for development into a park that is accessible and inclusive to persons of physical and mental disabilities.
- Authorizes the release of an easement respecting certain land in Montgomery County formerly under the jurisdiction of the Department of Developmental Disabilities.

### **PCSA caseworkers**

- Allows a public children services agency (PCSA) to hire as a caseworker a person who has completed at least 60 credit hours or the equivalent towards a degree in human services-related studies.
- Exempts a PCSA caseworker from the requirement to obtain a job-related bachelor's degree within five years of employment if the caseworker demonstrates hardship and is determined to be in good standing.

### **Erie County Municipal Court**

- Extends the territorial jurisdiction of the Erie County Municipal Court beyond the south shore of Lake Erie to the international boundary line between the U.S. and Canada.

## **S.B. 58**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Johnson and Gavarone

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### **Firearm and knife liability insurance or fees**

- Prohibits any license, permission, restriction, delay, or process, including by ordinance, rule, regulation, resolution, practice, or other action, or any threat of citation, prosecution, or other legal process from requiring an individual to possess firearm liability insurance or pay a fee for the possession of a firearm, firearm parts, firearm components, ammunition, or a knife.
- Preempts, supersedes, and declares null and void any license, permission, restriction, delay, or process that would require the possession of firearm liability insurance or the payment of a fee for the possession of a firearm, firearm parts, firearm components, ammunition, or a knife.
- Defines “firearm liability insurance” as a policy of liability insurance covering losses resulting from the use of a firearm owned by the person covered by the policy.

## **Second Amendment Financial Privacy Act**

- Prohibits government entities from keeping any list of privately owned firearms or owners of firearms.
- Prohibits financial institutions from assigning a firearms code in a way that distinguishes between a firearms retailer and other retailers.
- Prohibits financial institutions from declining a payment card transaction involving a firearms dealer merely because the transaction is assigned a firearms code.
- Requires the Attorney General to investigate alleged violations of the act's financial privacy provisions.
- Specifies that materials obtained by the Attorney General in conducting such an investigation are not public records.
- Expressly allows a court to order the destruction of records kept by a person or entity in violation of the act's financial privacy provisions.
- Names the financial privacy provisions of the act the Second Amendment Financial Privacy Act.

## Military and Veterans

### **S.B. 154**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Updates the definitions of the U.S. armed forces, armed services, and uniformed services throughout the Revised Code to include the U.S. Space Force.

### **S.B. 257**

**Primary Sponsors:** Sens. Chavez and Johnson

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Includes active duty service members who are Ohio residents via a residency or domicile election as eligible participants in the homeownership savings linked deposit program.
- Eliminates the interest rate applied to repayments for the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program if the recipient failed to complete their term of enlistment due to being in active or reserve duty of the armed forces.

# Public Officials and Employees

## H.B. 257

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Hoops and Claggett

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Authorizes members of certain public bodies to conduct and attend meetings and hearings virtually, by video conference or any other similar electronic technology, when certain conditions are met.
- Permits members of public bodies to attend meetings or hearings virtually when the public body has adopted certain policies, including methods by which members of the public may observe and attend meetings and hearings.
- Prohibits public bodies from attending a meeting or hearing virtually if the meeting or hearing involves a vote to approve a major nonroutine expenditure or significant hiring decision, or a vote on a tax issue or tax increase, or if the board members are compensated for or elected to their positions on the board.
- Prohibits public bodies from holding or attending hearings virtually without the consent of all parties to the hearing.
- Permits public bodies otherwise prohibited from holding or attending virtual meetings due to member compensation or election to attend a virtual meeting in which multiple public bodies are participants, provided the meeting is not for the purpose of voting on a major nonroutine expenditure, significant hiring decision, or tax issue or increase.
- Provides that a member of a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) board does not have to be present in person at a meeting in order to be part of a quorum or to vote if the JEDD board holds a virtual meeting in accordance with continuing provisions for other similar boards.
- Specifically allows the Public Employees Retirement System, the Board of Trustees of the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund, the School Employees Retirement Board, and the State Highway Patrol Retirement Board to meet virtually when they adopt a particular policy.

## H.B. 265

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Wiggam and Hall

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

- Establishes that each state agency is for all purposes to be considered in exclusive possession, custody, and control of its own records.
- Establishes that a state agency or public official is not to be considered a party to any litigation unless either the agency or official intervenes in the litigation or is named in the



case caption in conjunction with a pleading specifying factual allegations against the agency or official giving rise to at least one justiciable claim.

- Requires a person allegedly aggrieved by a violation of the Public Records Law to transmit a complaint to the public office or person responsible for public records allegedly responsible for the violation before bringing a claim in court.
- Establishes a three-day period in which a public office or person responsible for public records may cure or address an alleged violation of the Public Records Law, and prohibits a person allegedly aggrieved from filing a court action under the Public Records Law before the period expires.
- Makes statutory damages under the Public Records Law unavailable to certain incarcerated persons.
- Specifies “public record concerning a criminal investigation or prosecution concerning what would be a criminal investigation or prosecution if the subject of the investigation were an adult” includes certain designated public service worker records, making certain incarcerated individuals unable to request them unless certain requirements are met.
- Exempts the following records from disclosure under the Public Records Law:
  - The work schedules of designated public service workers;
  - Redaction request forms;
  - Affidavits submitted to a county auditor by a designated public service worker, a qualifying former designated public service worker, or the spouse of either, requesting the county auditor to remove the individual’s name from certain publicly available documents.
- Allows a qualifying former designated public service worker to request that a public office redact the former worker’s address from any record made available to the general public on the internet, and to request that a county auditor remove the individual’s name from certain publicly available documents.
- Prohibits vexatious litigators from requesting public records without the leave of a court and a court order.
- Permits a public office or person responsible for public records to require identification from a public records requestor if the office or person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the requestor is a vexatious litigator.
- Clarifies that the contents of a presentence investigation report or part of a presentence investigation report may be shared between courts.

# Public Retirement

## H.B. 78

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Seitz and J. Miller

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Qualifies retired teachers who are reemployed in positions covered by the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) to seek election to the STRS Board as retired teacher members.

## S.B. 6

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Schuring

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

- Prohibits the state retirement system boards, Administrator of Workers' Compensation, and boards of trustees of state institutions of higher education from making an investment decision with the primary purpose of influencing any social or environmental policy or the governance of any corporation (ESG).
- Requires the state retirement system boards, Administrator, and boards of trustees of state institutions of higher education to make investment decisions solely to maximize the return on investments.
- Specifies that a board of trustees is not required to accept a bequest made by a decedent to an endowment because the bequest specifically requests that the donation be used for the primary purpose of influencing ESG.
- Requires a board of trustees, if it accepts such a bequest, to comply with any conditions of that bequest regarding that purpose.
- Encourages a state retirement system, if the system offers a defined contribution plan, to offer multiple investment choices for members.

# Public Safety and Homeland Security

## H.B. 195

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Demetriou and Brennan

**Effective date:** August 9, 2024

### **Adaptive mobility dealer license**

- Establishes an adaptive mobility dealer (AMD) license and authorizes licensed AMDs to:
  - Display, sell, and deliver adaptive mobility vehicles (AMVs), which are vehicles designed, modified, or equipped in accordance with federal requirements to enable an individual with a disability to operate or be transported in the vehicle;
  - Sell and install adaptive mobility equipment, which are the mechanical or electronic devices or parts that are permanently attached to or incorporated into a vehicle to facilitate its use by a person who is aging or disabled; and
  - Provide maintenance and repair services for AMVs and adaptive mobility equipment.
- Prohibits an AMD from:
  - Representing that the AMD sells new motor vehicles;
  - Selling, transferring, or offering to sell or transfer a new motor vehicle unless that vehicle is purchased through a licensed new motor vehicle dealer; or
  - Selling or offering to sell an adaptive mobility vehicle without written documentation that proves the vehicle was modified or adapted in accordance with federal law.
- Establishes requirements for an AMD, similar to the requirements of other dealers in the Motor Vehicle Sales Law, pertaining to:
  - The application process;
  - Their established place of business;
  - The purchase of new motor vehicles to be adapted by the AMD into an AMV; and
  - Written documentation to provide with the sale of the AMV.
- Generally prohibits the sale of an AMV by any person not licensed as an AMD, except that a licensed new motor vehicle dealer may sell used AMVs.
- Specifies that AMVs are a type of passenger car or bus for purposes of registration taxes and fees and may be registered under the laws granting access to accessible parking spaces.

## **Purchase and lease of motor vehicles**

- Eliminates the requirement that an ultimate purchaser must use a motor vehicle as a consumer after purchase of the vehicle through a retail sale.
- Specifies that an AMD and a used motor vehicle dealer do not violate provisions of law that stipulate that vehicle transactions must take place on the dealer's premises when a customer executes purchase or lease documentation at a different location.

## **H.B. 303**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Hall and Santucci

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

## **Training of EMS personnel**

- Directs the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services to establish a process by which any person may request the Board to include topics in the training and continuing education programs required for emergency medical service personnel.

## **Medication aides**

- Repeals the statute establishing standards and conditions for administering prescription medications that apply only when practicing as a medication aide in a residential care facility, while maintaining the statute providing for standards and conditions that are the same regardless of an aide's practice location.
- Revises the standards and conditions maintained by the act, including by authorizing an aide to administer initial doses of prescription medications, clarifying that an aide may administer prescription medications on an as-needed basis regardless of whether the supervising nurse is present at the aide's practice location, and specifically authorizing a medication aide to administer schedule II controlled substances, but only if administered orally or topically.
- Requires the Board of Nursing to adopt in rule certain standards governing the approval of, and participation in, medication aide training programs, but only if the Board exercises its permissive authority to adopt such rules.

## **H.B. 452**

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. White and Baker

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

## **Hospital security plans**

- Requires each hospital system and each hospital that is not part of a hospital system to establish a security plan for preventing workplace violence.

- Specifies various requirements for the plans, including that the plans be submitted to the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and be reviewed and evaluated annually.
- Requires each hospital system and each hospital that is not part of a hospital system to establish a workplace violence incident reporting system.
- Makes it mandatory, rather than permissive, for all hospitals to post a notice that aggressive behavior toward staff will not be tolerated.
- Requires the Department of Higher Education, jointly with ODH, to survey colleges and universities that provide education and training to students seeking to become health care providers to determine whether the education and training they provide addresses workplace violence prevention.
- Requires the Chancellor of Higher Education to make recommendations and prepare a report for the General Assembly based on the survey results.

### **Civil immunity for self or other-defense and nonprofit corporations**

- Specifies that the immunity that applies to nonprofit corporations for any of the following also applies to a for-profit corporation that leases its property to the nonprofit corporation or permits its property to be used by the nonprofit corporation for any purpose:
  - Injury, death, or loss to person or property allegedly caused by or related to a concealed handgun licensee bringing a handgun onto the premises or to an event of the nonprofit corporation;
  - Injury, death, or loss to person or property allegedly caused by or related to a decision to permit a licensee to bring, or prohibit a licensee from bringing, a handgun onto the premises or to an event of the nonprofit corporation.
- Generally grants civil immunity to a person for certain injuries allegedly caused by the person acting in self-defense or defense of another during the commission, or imminent commission, of an offense of violence to protect the members or guests of a nonprofit corporation.
- Specifies that a person who approaches or enters a nonprofit corporation's premises or event with intent to commit an offense of violence is presumed liable for any injury, death, or loss to person or property resulting from an act of self-defense or defense of another against that person.

## Special Designations

### **H.B. 28**

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Humphrey

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

Designates March as “Triple Negative Breast Cancer Awareness Month.”

### **S.B. 225**

**Primary Sponsor:** Sen. Roegner

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Renames “Veterans Suicide Awareness Day” as “Veterans Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day” and transfers the observance from the first Saturday of May to September 22.

# Taxation

## H.B. 496

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Hoops

**Effective date:** April 9, 2025

### Property tax administration

- Modifies information a county auditor must certify in the process of submitting a property tax levy to voters, including information appearing on election notices and ballot language, as follows:
  - Requires rounding estimated revenue to the nearest \$1 rather than the nearest \$1,000.
  - Requires this estimate and rate estimates for bond and fixed-sum levies to be based on valuations on the last available tax list rather than a possible estimate.
  - Requires certifying the residential/agricultural effective rate of renewed or extended levies based on the last known rate, as opposed to an estimated effective rate that assumes the levy is approved.
- Repeals a recently enacted law that requires a county board of revision (BOR) to dismiss a property tax complaint filed by a political subdivision if the BOR does not render a decision on the complaint within one year.
- Modifies property tax counter-complaint filing deadlines.
- Modifies the requirement that the owner of tax-exempt property inform the county auditor of changes in the property's exemption status, by instead requiring notification of changes in the property's use.
- Allows a county auditor to provide a waiver or refund of manufactured home taxes due to damage or destruction of a manufactured home on the auditor's own initiative, rather than only upon notice from a property owner or third party.
- Modifies how real property and manufactured home tax overpayments are apportioned to each taxing district, moving to a preceding-year basis rather than on the basis of taxing ratios in the year of overpayment.
- Clarifies that county treasurers and auditors may deduct their compensation for collecting property taxes from state homestead exemption and rollback reimbursements.
- Allows the county auditor to designate a location within the county where the sale of tax-foreclosed forfeited lands will occur.

**Deputy county auditors**

- Eliminates a requirement for the county auditor and county treasurer to keep records of all appointments and removals of deputy auditors.

**Tax foreclosure sales**

- Prohibits the transfer of property sold at a tax foreclosure sale unless the purchaser supplies an affidavit stating that the purchaser or certain related parties do not own tax delinquent property in the state or that such delinquency is justified or erroneous.

**Liens for unpaid Hamilton County lodging taxes**

- Allows a county with a population greater than 800,000, but less than one million, i.e., Hamilton County, to enforce payment of delinquent lodging taxes by placing a property tax lien on the delinquent hotel.



# Utilities

## H.B. 226

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Robb Blasdel and Jarrells

**Effective date:** October 24, 2024

- Permits a water-works company to replace lead customer-owned water service lines, or customer-owned water service lines of other compositions, as part of a scheduled utility main replacement project, emergency placement, or when ordered or mandated to do so.
- Requires a water-works company to reimburse a customer who replaces a lead customer-owned water service line, or customer-owned water service line of other composition, that was ordered or mandated to be replaced, if the customer requests reimbursement within 12 months after completing the replacement.
- Requires the cost of replacing water service lines and reimbursements paid to water service customers to be included in the company's public utility property valuation report used in the company's rate case.

## H.B. 308

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Stein and Brennan

**Effective date:** March 20, 2025

### **Oil and Gas Land Management Commission leases**

- Increases, from three to five years, the term of the standard lease adopted by the Oil and Gas Land Management Commission for use by a state agency when leasing oil and gas rights on property owned or managed by the state agency.

### **Broadband Pole Replacement and Undergrounding Program**

- Modifies the reimbursement formula under the Broadband Pole Replacement and Undergrounding Program as follows:
  - For actual and reasonable costs to perform a pole replacement or mid-span pole installation, reimbursements equal the lesser of \$7,500 multiplied by the number of pole replacements and mid-pole installations in an application or 75% of the total eligible costs therein.
  - For actual and reasonable undergrounding costs, reimbursements must not exceed 75% of the total eligible costs, except that the reimbursements cannot exceed the amount that would be available if the applicant did a pole replacement or mid-span pole installation instead.

- Adds to those costs that are eligible for reimbursement undergrounding costs needed because the process for obtaining access to poles is causing, or is reasonably anticipated to cause, a delay that impacts the applicant’s ability to meet required deadlines.

### **Board of health special funds**

- Expands the purposes for which money derived from the general disposal fee on construction and demolition debris (C&DD) disposed of at a C&DD facility or a solid waste facility may be used by a board of health to include both:
  - Administration and enforcement of the laws governing solid and hazardous waste; and
  - Mitigation of any impacts to the public from a C&DD facility and solid waste disposal or transfer facility within the health district, including ensuring inspection of any such facility to prevent any negative public impact.

### **Nuclear energy as green energy**

- Includes energy generated by a nuclear reaction as “green energy.”

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