THE STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Governor DeWine signs capital budget, including $50 million in funding for county jails, into law

Governor DeWine signed House Bill 687, sponsored by Representative Oelslager, into law on June 14th. Governor DeWine's signature concludes a whirlwind capital budget process that occurred from late May to early June.

The bill appropriates $50 million for the construction and/or renovation of county jails. The legislative parameters for the $50 million are identical to the $50 million included in the previous capital budget bill, allowing counties to submit an application for these funds.

A list of all capital projects included in the bill by county can be found here.

The $3.5 billion dollar budget provides funding to projects ranging from supporting Intel in Licking County, to providing a historic investment to the state's parks and campgrounds. The bill also contains a unique provision that authorizes the administration to use its discretion on whether to pay up to $1.5 billion dollars of the included state spending by dipping into the state's General Revenue Fund in lieu of bonding.

Some additional highlights from House Bill 687 include:

- $191 million for community projects. A full list can be found here.
- $600 million for school construction and renovations.
- $100 million for school safety grants.

Please feel free to reach out to the CCAO policy team with any questions about the contents of the capital bill.

Governor DeWine signs several pieces of legislation following spring legislative session

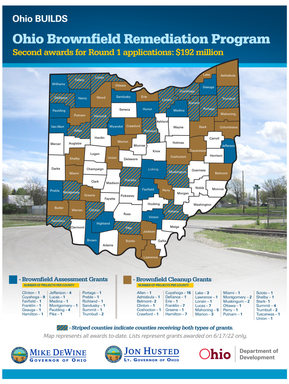
This week Governor DeWine signed several pieces of legislation into law following the spring legislative session. The following bill impact county government:

House Bill 140 – Sponsored by Representative Derek Merrin, this bill makes changes to the terminology and appearance of ballot language and official notices used for property tax ballot issues. Most notably, property tax election notices and ballot language must state the tax levy's rate in dollars for each $100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value (i.e., true value), instead of the rate in dollars for each $100 of taxable value. For an existing levy, the stated rate will be the effective millage for residential/agricultural property. For new levies, the rate will be the voted millage rate. The ballot language and election notice also will be required to state the estimated amount the levy would collect each year. Ballot language must also appear in a uniform font and without boldface type.

Senate Bill 15 – Sponsored by Senator Steve Wilson, this bill provides that a fiscal officer, including county treasurers, county auditors, and other local fiscal officers, will be liable when a loss of public funds arises from a negligent or wrongful act.

Senate Bill 287 – Sponsored by Senator Nathan Manning, this bill allows a county veterans service office to use a credit card to pay for temporary and necessary care assistance expenses.

Members with questions should contact CCAO Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck, jhoneck@ccao.org.



Second round of brownfield remediation grants announced

Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted announced the second round of brownfield remediation grants today, totaling more than $192 million. The grants are part of a larger $350 million grant program, which targets industrial, commercial and institutional brownfield sites that contain or have the potential to release hazardous substances or petroleum.

CCAO worked with the DeWine administration to push back the application deadline for the round two funding to provide counties with additional time to review projects, and submit quality applications. Today's grant awards are a result of that collaboration and will be used to fund 112 projects across 41 counties. Over $187 million will go towards cleanup projects and $4.5 million will be used for brownfield assessment projects. The full list of brownfield sites awarded funds can be accessed here.

Pursuant to the language in the state operating budget, any brownfield grant funding that was not allocated during rounds one and two of funding will be available to all counties during round three of funding. The application process for round three funding will open on July 1, 2022.

"These properties are vital spaces in our communities, ones that are not only being wasted in their current capacity, but oftentimes are a danger to their local communities," said Governor DeWine. "Today, we're reclaiming these spaces for the future of our residents, businesses, and communities."

Bill Introductions

HB 699 (Seitz, Galonski) - To modify various aspects of the law regarding crimes and corrections, correctional officers and employees, coroner records, inmate internet access, civil protection orders, delinquent child adjudications, youthful offender parole review, OVI and other traffic offenses, and criminal record sealing and expungement.

HB 700 (Sobecki, Smith, M.) - To modify the allocation of state sales and use tax revenue from the sale of certain firearms and ammunition.

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