STATEHOUSE REPORT

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OSU Extension discusses educator cost share increase with Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee

Earlier this month, the CCAO Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hosted OSU Extension Interim Director David Civittolo and his staff to provide an overview of the university's state and county funding budget.

The university proposed a $10,000 increase to the county cost share for extension educators over the next two fiscal years. Currently, counties pay $32,750 for the first OSU Educator and $42,750 for any additional educators within the county. The proposal would have counties pay an additional $5,000 in calendar years 2025 and 2026, with the intention of having the same cost share amount for all educators.

Currently, the average salary, including benefits, for an educator is $85,000, which means counties pay about 44.7% of that salary on average. The proposal would increase that average to 45.1% for 2026 and beyond.

Internally, OSU Extension has four pay bands for OSU Educators. Most educators fall in the first and second pay bands and have most of their salary paid for by the county, while most educators in the 3rd & 4th pay bands are paid primarily by OSU Extension. Extension's proposal to increase the county cost share will cause many educators in the 3rd pay band to have the majority of their salary paid by the county. Once the proposal is in full effect by 2026, the 4th pay band will be the only one where OSU picks up most of the salary.

You can find more information about [OSU Extension education pay here](#).

As a reminder, on July 1, 2024, OSU Extension increased the salary for all educators by an average of $2,500, with the university covering the entirety of the raise. OSU Extension salary for educators ranks last within the region among comparable programs.

The proposal would also be considered the largest increase to the county cost share within the last five fiscal years. For additional questions or concerns, please contact CCAO Policy Analyst James Kennedy at jkennedy@ccao.org.

State awards $50 million in brownfield remediation and site revitalization grants

Last week, the DeWine-Husted Administration announced the fifth round of awards for the Brownfield Remediation Program and the Demolition and Site Revitalization Program. The awards granted for brownfield remediation total $16.2 million and will fund 52 projects across 31 counties. The site revitalization awards total $33.1 million and will fund 341 projects across five counties.

You can view the complete list of brownfield remediation projects and demolition and site revitalization projects.

Legislative Activity

Introduction of Bills

The following bill(s) that may be of interest to counties were introduced this week:

- Senate Bill 316 (Senator Kent Smith): To create a music incubator program to provide sales tax rebates to certain music venues and festival promoters.
- House Bill 666 (Representative Josh Williams): To require state and local authorities to cooperate with the federal government in the enforcement of immigration laws, to prescribe funding reductions for noncompliance, to name this act the Protecting Ohio Communities Act, and to declare an emergency.