



STATEHOUSE REPORT

Published by: County Commissioners Association of Ohio

209 East State Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309
Phone: 614-221-5627 • Fax: 614-221-6986 • www.ccao.org

November 1, 2024

Lame Duck preview and OCCO Legislative Reception

Next Tuesday is Election Day and, in its wake, will come the "Lame Duck" period of the 135th General Assembly. Lame duck sessions are always chaotic, with bills moving quickly and a flurry of amendments (some of them containing entire bills) getting attached to the bills that are moving. As has been reported, the 135th General Assembly has passed a below-average number of bills, suggesting that this year's lame duck may be even more frantic than usual as legislators try to enact their legislative priorities before the end of the General Assembly.

As we head into lame duck, CCAO is primarily monitoring three pieces of legislation:

House Bill 497 (Reps. Brian Stewart and Roy Klopfenstein)

- The CCAO-backed "county omnibus" bill, includes a number of provisions to streamline county government.
- You can read more about the [bill's provisions here](#).
- The bill is currently in the Senate but has not been referred to a committee.

House Bill 430 (Reps. Roy Klopfenstein and Elgin Rogers, Jr.)

- The bill allows counties to contract with adjacent county engineers if the county engineer position is vacant or the county cannot fill the position.
- The current language requires the county to pay the full salary of the contracted engineer instead of allowing the pay to be negotiated in the contract (as is the case with a similar provision pertaining to county coroners).
- CCAO has requested an amendment to the bill that allows commissioners to have the ability to negotiate the amount in the contract.
- The bill is currently in the Senate but has not been referred to a committee.

House Bill 315 (Reps. Thomas Hall and Bill Seitz)

- The "township omnibus" bill. It originally included a provision expanding the number of townships that could create New Community Authorities (NCAs).

- Successful lobbying by our members and the Association led to that provision's removal. Policy staff will work to ensure the language is not restored.
- The bill is currently in the Senate but has not been referred to a committee.

The policy staff will need your help in conveying to legislators the importance of CCAO's priorities during lame duck. One way you can discuss these priorities is at the Ohio Council of County Officials (OCCO) legislative reception on November 12th at the Statehouse.

The reception will take place at the Statehouse Atrium and will last from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Officials can [register to attend the reception here](#).

The reception is a great place to interact with your colleagues and members of the General Assembly as we prepare for the lame duck session. All CCAO members are encouraged to attend and talking points will be provided to our members as we get closer to the event.

If you have any feedback to give the policy team regarding lame duck priorities, please contact policy@ccao.org.

CCAO Platform development process continues

Last week, the CCAO Board of Directors began its review of the Association's 2025-2026 Legislative Platform. The platform update and review process are very collaborative and include revisions from CCAO's members.

The process began with a survey sent to the full membership and each standing committee, asking for suggested updates to the platform. Following the survey, the CCAO policy staff reviewed the results and legislative achievements from the current General Assembly before they made suggested changes to the platform. Those suggestions were then sent to the CCAO standing committees for review and eventual approval. Following the committee review process, the updates to the platform were compiled by staff and distributed to the Board of Directors.

The board will continue its review and provide feedback for the policy staff on further changes at its November meeting. After those suggested changes are incorporated, the platform is voted upon by the full CCAO membership at the Association's Business Meeting at the 144th CCAO / CEAO Winter Conference.

The CCAO policy team would like to thank our members for their thoughtful revisions to the platform and for the thorough review process.

Legislative Activity

Introduction of Bills

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

- [House Bill 683](#) (Representatives Don Jones and Jay Edwards): To provide additional support for soil and water districts through the Department of Agriculture and to make an appropriation.
- [Senate Bill 319](#) (Senator Niraj Antani): To require proof of citizenship to register to vote or to update a voter registration and to designate an elector who registers on a federal form without providing proof of citizenship as a federal-only voter.