



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Important advocacy needed next week, Task Force Meeting moved to Wednesday

Next Tuesday, the House of Representatives will release their initial round of changes to the operating budget (House Bill 96) through a substitute bill. The House Finance Committee will adopt the substitute bill on Tuesday at 1:30pm. The next round of budget amendments is due on Thursday, giving a very tight window for advocacy.

The Association will need to move fast to advocate for the protection, addition, or removal of items that support or oppose county priorities. Please keep an eye on your inbox Tuesday afternoon for an alert regarding the provisions of the substitute bill. As a reminder, the Association had two priority amendment requests: one to increase funding for indigent defense reimbursement by \$93 million over the biennium and another to increase the user fee that supports Next Generation 9-1-1 to \$1.00 per month. You can review the full list of CCAO's amendment requests and provisions the Association wants to protect on our [Bill Tracker](#).

As a result of this timeline, we will be moving the advocacy task force call that is currently scheduled for Monday to Wednesday (April 2) at 3:00pm. Members will receive an update on the substitute bill changes from the Policy Team and discuss future amendment or defense strategy. If you are interested in joining the Advocacy Task Force call, please contact Karla Dunbar at kdunbar@ccao.org or the Policy Team at policy@ccao.org.

Energy bills pass respective chambers, CCAO supports 7% assessment rate on new generation PUTPP

In the past two weeks, both chambers of the General Assembly have passed their versions of energy sector reform bills, setting the stage for negotiations between the House and the Senate on a final version. Both bills are intended to attract more energy generation to Ohio

to help power the state's burgeoning technology economy and to help lower energy prices for residents.

Last week, the Senate unanimously passed [Senate Bill 2](#) (Senators Bill Reineke and Shane Wilkin) and this week, the House overwhelmingly passed [House Bill 15](#) (Representative Roy Klopfenstein). Both bills encompass a wide range of policies. One notable place they contrast is how they handle property taxation of public utility tangible personal property (PUTPP).

The PUTPP tax classifies public utilities into four types, with different assessment rates on different property types. Table 1 shows the classifications and assessment rates under current law.

Table 1: Current Law Assessment Rates for Public Utilities		
Public Utility Type	PUTPP Type	Assessment Rate
Electric Companies	Taxable transmission and distribution property and energy conversion equipment	85%
	All other taxable property	24%
Energy Companies	Taxable production equipment	24%
	All other taxable property	85%
Rural Electric Companies	Taxable transmission and distribution property and energy conversion equipment	50%
	All other taxable property	25%
Other Companies	Heating and pipeline companies	88%
	Natural gas, waterworks, and water transportation companies	25%

Both bills make changes to these rates by applying lower rates or full exemptions for new TPP. The primary difference between the two is that SB 2 fully exempts new generation PUTPP and new energy conversion TPP from taxation while HB 15 lowers the assessment rate on those types of PUTPP to 7% (down 25% or 24% for generation TPP and 85% for energy conversion TPP). Table 2 compares the changes made in SB 2 and HB 15.

Table 2: PUTPP Assessment Changes in HB 15, SB 2		
Property Assessment Type	House Bill 15	Senate Bill 2
<i>Electric Company</i>		
Transmission/Distribution TPP, Existing	85%	85%
Transmission/Distribution TPP, New	25%	25%
Energy Conversion TPP, Existing	85%	85%
Energy Conversion TPP, New	7%	0%
Generation TPP and Other TPP, Existing	24%	24%
Generation TPP, New	7%	0%
Repowered or Converted Existing Generation TPP	7%	N/A
<i>Energy Company</i>		
Transmission/Distribution TPP, Existing	85%	85%
Transmission/Distribution TPP, New	25%	25%
Energy Conversion TPP, Existing	85%	85%

Table 2: PUTPP Assessment Changes in HB 15, SB 2		
Property Assessment Type	House Bill 15	Senate Bill 2
Energy Company (cont.)		
Energy Conversion TPP, New	7%	0%
Generation TPP, Existing	24%	24%
Generation TPP, New	7%	0%
Repowered or Converted Existing Generation TPP	7%	N/A
Other TPP	85%	85%
Rural Electric Company		
Transmission/Distribution TPP, Existing	50%	50%
Transmission/Distribution TPP, New	25%	25%
Energy Conversion TPP, Existing	50%	50%
Energy Conversion TPP, New	7%	0%
Generation TPP and Other TPP, Existing	25%	25%
Generation TPP, New	7%	0%
Repowered or Converted Existing Generation TPP	7%	N/A
Other		
Pipeline Company, Existing TPP	88%	88%
Pipeline Company, New TPP	25%	25%

The PUTPP assessment rate changes in both bills first take effect in TY 2027.

The bills contain other provisions that pertain to counties:

- House Bill 15
 - Requires PUCO to review MRO applications to ensure the application does not contain any rate, price, term, condition, or provision that would have an adverse effect on large-scale governmental aggregation.
 - Requires PUCO to adopt rules and issue orders to encourage and promote large-scale governmental aggregation.
 - Allows boards of county commissioners to petition the Department of Development to designate a brownfield or former coal mine site as a priority reinvestment area.
 - Requires that the board of county commissioners be the obligee of the decommissioning bond for Community Energy Facilities created under the Community Energy Pilot Program.
- Senate Bill 2
 - Requires PUCO to adopt rules and issue orders to encourage and promote large-scale governmental aggregation.
 - Allows boards of county commissioners to petition the Department of Development to designate a brownfield or former coal mine site as a priority reinvestment area.
 - Grants county commissioners (along with boards of zoning appeals, township trustees, and municipalities) the same zoning authority regarding anaerobic digesters as they currently have for small solar and wind facilities.
 - An anaerobic digester is a facility used to treat organic materials (food waste, manure, sewage sludge, etc.) to produce biogas and digestate.

At its March 2025 meeting, the CCAO Board of Directors took a position in favor of the 7% assessment rate on future generation and conversion TPP contained in HB 15. The Association is neutral on the other provisions of the bills.

If you have questions about the bill or testimony, please contact Nick Ciolli at nciolli@ccao.org.

Solid waste management district bill reintroduced, receives hearings

Last week, Senator Bill Reineke introduced [Senate Bill 147](#), which makes several changes to the laws governing solid waste and solid waste management districts (SWMD) in Ohio. The bill received a second hearing in the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee on Tuesday.

SB 147 allows a county in any joint SWMD to withdraw from the district at any time. The counties that comprise the joint SWMD would enter into an MOU to provide continuity of operations during a two year “divorce” period. During that time, the two or more new SWMDs would create new solid waste management plans for approval by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA).

Additionally, the bill allows a SWMD to levy a tiered fee on the disposal of construction and demolition debris (C&DD), with the revenue going to the local health department that oversees the facility that collected the fees. SB 147 also adds financial assistance to individual counties, boards of health, municipalities, and townships to mitigate the impact of solid waste facilities on public health, safety, and welfare to the list of permissible uses for solid waste disposal fees. A full [analysis](#) of the bill is available.

Last General Assembly, Senator Reineke introduced similar legislation, [Senate Bill 119](#). The bill passed the Senate unanimously, but did not receive a vote in the House prior to the end of the General Assembly. Senator Reineke reintroduced the legislation with some changes aimed at facilitating the separation of a SWMD in his district and providing the health department with additional resources following years long issues with a local landfill.

During the Tuesday hearing, Seneca County Commissioner Anthony Paradiso provided [proponent testimony](#) on SB 147 and shared their desire to leave their current SWMD and become a single county district. The committee also heard proponent testimony from the [Seneca County General Health District](#), with written testimony submitted by the [Mayor of Fostoria](#).

Senate Bill 147 will receive a third hearing on Tuesday, April 1, at which all testimony will be accepted. The bill is also marked for a possible vote. At this time, CCAO is completing our standing policy committee review of the legislation.

If you have questions about the bill or testimony, please contact Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org.

Allen County Commissioner Cory Noonan provides overview of county government to House Local Government Committee

Representative Angie King, the chair of the House Local Government Committee and a former county recorder, has asked the Ohio Township Association, Ohio Municipal League, and the County Commissioners Association of Ohio to provide an overview of various local governments in the House Local Government Committee. [On Wednesday](#), Allen County Commissioner Cory Noonan, who also serves as chair of the Jobs, Economic Development, and Infrastructure (JEDI) committee and is the current president of CEBCO, provided testimony behalf of CCAO.

His ten-minute testimony provided an overview of the structure, funding sources, and services provided by county government. [Commissioner Noonan's testimony](#) also stressed the importance of the partnership between the county and the state in terms of service delivery. After his testimony, he received several questions about the structure of county government and regional planning in the county. Following the committee hearing, members expressed their gratitude for the testimony and thanked Commissioner Noonan for attending the hearing.

We would like to thank Chairwoman Angie King for the opportunity to provide testimony and for her and the committee's support of county government!

Ohio Realtors Association and Greater Ohio Policy Center release Ohio Housing Toolkit

Housing continues to be a growing issue for our membership and CCAO is always looking for areas of partnership in this area. Over the last couple of months, we have been working with the Ohio Realtors Association and others on regional housing forums. This week, CCAO was happy to support the launch of [Housing Ohio: Tools for Development](#) by the Ohio Realtors Association and Greater Ohio Policy Center.

This toolkit is designed to promote new housing production and infill development in Ohio by providing three key tools to local governments:

- **A la carte Zoning Adjustments** – Actionable recommendations for zoning code adjustments that eliminate barriers to infill housing and encourage new development. These changes are simple enough to be implemented by city staff without requiring outside consultants.
- **Free Building Plans** – Two pre-designed building plans (a single-family home and a duplex) with multiple variations are available free of charge. These plans help reduce soft costs, such as architectural fees, and can be incorporated into pre-approved plans programs to streamline permitting.

- **Pre-Approved Plans Program Guide** – A detailed roadmap for municipalities to establish a pre-approved plans program, enabling expedited permitting and lowering development barriers in their communities.

The Ohio Realtors Association will be hosting a [webinar on Tuesday](#) to go through the toolkit.

Legislative Activity

Committee Hearings

The following committees held hearings this week regarding bills that may interest counties.

House Public Safety

- [House Bill 1](#) (Representatives Angie King and Roy Klopfenstein): To modify the law that prohibits certain governments, businesses, and individuals from acquiring certain real property.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 20](#) (Representatives Thomas Hall and Phil Plummer): To prohibit a person from knowingly harassing or impeding an emergency service responder who is engaged in the lawful performance of a legal duty and to clarify that heightened penalties apply for menacing a probation officer.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 82](#) (Representatives Gary Click and Mark Johnson): Regarding traffic offenses in construction zones.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate General Government

- [Senate Bill 88](#) (Senator Terry Johnson): To modify the law that prohibits certain governments, businesses, and individuals from acquiring certain real property.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the Ohio Farm Bureau and State Armor Action.
- [Senate Bill 63](#) (Senators Theresa Gavarone and Bill DeMora): To generally prohibit the use of ranked choice voting and to withhold Local Government Fund distributions from a municipality or chartered county that uses ranked choice voting.
 - Third hearing, proponent testimony from the Foundation for Government Accountability, the America First Policy Institute, and five others; opponent testimony from Common Cause Ohio, the Ohio Municipal League, and more than 60 other individuals and organizations; interested party testimony from the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections.

House Development

- [House Bill 109](#) (Representative Justin Pizzulli): To limit the authority of local governments to regulate short-term rental properties, to extend local lodging taxes to short-term rentals, to require collection of those taxes by short-term rental platforms, and to require real estate licenses to be issued electronically.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Local Government

- [House Bill 146](#) (Representative Brian Lorenz): To change the civil service status of certain positions in a county probation department from classified to unclassified.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Ways and Means

- [House Bill 30](#) (Representatives Adam Mathews and Brian Lampton): To phase-down the state income tax to a flat rate of 2.75% over two years.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Addiction and Community Revitalization

- [Senate Bill 138](#) (Senator Terry Johnson): To modify various laws regarding boards of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services and to impose penalties for not registering recovery housing residences.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Judiciary

- [Senate Bill 123](#) (Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson): To prohibit a law enforcement agency for charging a fee for preparing or producing a video public record for a person known or presumed to be depicted in the video.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Introduction of Bills

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

- [House Bill 196](#) (Representatives Rodney Creech and Angie King): To allow an elector who is not a member of a political party to protest a person's candidacy for that party's nomination on certain grounds and to provide space on candidacy forms for former names.
- [House Bill 197](#) (Representatives Dan Troy and Beryl Piccolantonio): To require a presidential primary election to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May.
- [House Bill 199](#) (Representatives Kevin Miller and Phil Plummer): To make changes to the laws governing all-purpose vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, snowmobiles, utility vehicles, and mini-trucks.
- [House Bill 200](#) (Representatives Gary Click and Nick Santucci): To prohibit a person who is unlawfully present in the United States from entering or being present in Ohio, to require law enforcement agencies and detention facilities to cooperate in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, and to withhold state local government funds from a subdivision that does not abide by the act.

Upcoming Committee Hearings

The following committees are currently scheduled to meet and discuss bills that may be of interest to counties. Other committees will likely meet as well, but as of press time for

Statehouse Report, they have not released agendas. Please note that these schedules are subject to change.

If you would like to offer testimony on any bill, please visit the committee page and contact the committee chair's office for instructions on how to submit testimony.

Tuesday, April 1

[House Finance](#) (1:30 p.m.)

- [House Bill 96](#): Main Operating Budget
 - No testimony
 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL**
- [House Bill 80](#): Industrial Commission Budget
 - All testimony
 - **POSSIBLE VOTE**
- [House Bill 81](#): Bureau of Workers' Compensation Budget
 - All testimony
 - **POSSIBLE VOTE**

[Senate Finance](#) (2:00 p.m.)

- Budget testimony from the Office of Budget and Management and Legislative Service Commission.

[Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources](#) (4:00 p.m.)

- [Senate Bill 147](#) (Senator Bill Reineke): To make changes to the laws governing the transfer and disposal of solid waste and construction and demolition debris and to provide for new procedures governing a county's withdrawal from a joint solid waste management district.
 - Third hearing, all testimony
 - **POSSIBLE VOTE**

[House Arts, Athletics, and Tourism](#) (4:15 p.m.)

- [House Bill 138](#) (Representatives Mike Dovilla and Nick Santucci): To authorize the creation of tourism promotion districts and the levying of assessments therein.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Wednesday, April 2

[House Finance](#) (9:00 a.m.)

- [House Bill 96](#): Main Operating Budget
 - All testimony

[House Local Government](#) (9:00 a.m.)

- [House Bill 154](#) (Representatives David Thomas and Chris Glassburn): To require school district approval of residential community reinvestment area property tax exemptions.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

[Senate Finance](#) (9:30 a.m.)

- Budget testimony from the statewide elected officials

House Ways and Means (11:30 a.m.)

- [House Bill 103](#) (Representatives Dan Troy and Thomas Hall): To increase the homestead exemption amount and income limit.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 186](#) (Representatives Jim Hoops and David Thomas): To authorize a reduction in school district property taxes affected by a millage floor that would limit increases in such taxes according to inflation and to require a corresponding adjustment in the school funding formula.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Agriculture (11:30 a.m.)

- [House Bill 163](#) (Representatives Tristan Rader and Kellie Deeter): To require Ohio's SNAP program to begin using chip-enabled EBT cards, to name this act the Enhanced Cybersecurity for SNAP Act of 2025, and to make an appropriation.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 174](#) (Representatives Tristan Radar and Desiree Sims): To refund SNAP recipients who have been victims of electronic theft or fraud, to name this act the No Hungry Families Act, and to make an appropriation.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Wednesday, April 3

House Finance (9:00 a.m.)

- [House Bill 96](#): Main Operating Budget
 - All testimony