



STATEHOUSE REPORT

Published by: County Commissioners Association of Ohio

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October 17, 2025

CCAO testifies in support of Dangerous Dog Legislation along with county dog wardens

On Tuesday, [Licking County Commissioner Tim Bubbs testified](#) in support of [House Bill 247](#) (Representatives Kevin Miller and Meredith Lawson-Rowe) in Senate Judiciary Committee on behalf of CCAO. The bill updates the statutes surrounding nuisance, vicious, and dangerous dogs and provides Ohio's dog wardens with the tools to enforce the statutes.

The bill creates a hearing process for a court to designate dogs as nuisance, dangerous, or vicious dogs based on certain criteria. HB 247 replaces the "one free bite" rule that currently exists in the Revised Code with respect to dog bites. Under the bill, a dog can be designated a dangerous or vicious dog at the first incident if the dog kills or causes serious physical injury to a person or livestock.

Additionally, HB 247 imposes new requirements for owners of vicious or dangerous dogs and increases penalties for violations of those requirements. The bill also provides tools to the county dog warden to enforce these violations by clarifying that dog wardens have the authority to make arrests and enforce all of Ohio's Dog Law, rather than only specified provisions under current law.

The bill also creates the potential for increased revenue to fund the dog warden's office through the encouragement of dog registration with the county auditor and increased registration fees for dangerous and vicious dogs.

[CCAO testified in support](#) of this bill in the House of Representatives. The House Public Safety Committee made some changes to the bill following the testimony. The House combined elements of [House Bill 240](#) and [House Bill 241](#), both sponsored by Representatives Cecil Thomas and Meredith Lawson-Rowe, into HB 247.

Some of the changes include restoring current law under which a warden can designate a dog, subject to owner appeal, if the animal did not kill or seriously injure a person, and, if the

warden determines, the dog may remain safely at the owner's residence. Additionally, the House removed a requirement for courts to conduct dog designation hearings concurrently with criminal proceedings against the owner for dog attack.

The committee also heard testimony from [Avery Russell](#), a dog attack victim and namesake for the bill, and her mother Drew.

Additionally, the committee heard proponent testimony from [Larry Williams, the Licking County Dog Warden](#) on behalf of the Ohio County Dog Warden Association. CCAO has worked on this bill with the association, and we are thankful for their support and partnership.

The bill is expected to move out of the Senate and be signed into law by the end of the year.

Federal government shutdown update

Since October 1, the federal government has been in a partial government shutdown due to the inability of Congress to pass an appropriations bill. It is unclear how long the shutdown will continue. Currently the longest federal government shutdown lasted 35 days (December 21, 2018, to January 25, 2019).

The ongoing shutdown raises questions about the continuity of certain federal programs. On a program level, Medicaid and block grant programs like Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF), child care and the social services block grant will continue for now as business as usual. The biggest question regarding the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which does not have funding for November.

At this point, counties have not [received SNAP guidance past October](#). CCAO remains in close contact with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) as well as the Ohio Job and Family Service Directors Association (OJFSDA) for the latest updates from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

We will share any further information we receive from ODJFS or OJFSDA with members to ensure as much preparation time as possible.

Legislative Activity

Committee Hearings

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

House Development

- [House Bill 17](#) (Representative Brian Lorenz): To classify certain storage condominiums as residential property for tax purposes.
 - Fourth hearing, proponent testimony from the Horsepower Farms of Powell Property Owners Association and nine private individuals.

House Judiciary

- [House Bill 338](#) (Representatives Mark Johnson and Phil Plummer): To enact Andy's Law to increase the penalty for assaulting or causing the death of specified victims at state or local correctional institutions and to make changes to department of rehabilitation and correction policies and procedures.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Local Government

- [House Bill 493](#) (Representatives David Thomas and Dan Troy): To sunset the sale of delinquent property tax certificates on January 1, 2027.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Local Government

- [House Bill 124](#) (Representatives David Thomas and Thomas Hall): To modify the process for making property tax sales-assessment ratio studies.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Community Revitalization

- [House Bill 58](#) (Representatives Justin Pizzulli and Dontavious Jarrells): To require state certification of recovery housing residences, to establish additional duties regarding services offered by community addiction services providers, and to create the Ohio Recovery Housing Task Force.
 - Third hearing, no testimony
 - **AMENDED** to, among other changes, remove a prior requirement for a certificate of need, to create civil penalties for violations of the bill's provisions, and to improve communication procedures between the Department of Behavioral Health and ADAMH boards.

Introduction of Bills

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

- [House Bill 509](#) (Representative Michelle Teska): To exclude certain financial records held by clerks of court from destruction upon ordered expungement of a criminal record.
- [House Bill 510](#) (Representative Levi Dean): To prohibit any requirement that employees join or pay dues to an employee organization.
- [House Bill 512](#) (Representatives Thaddeus Claggett and Heidi Workman): To modify the law regarding project labor agreements in public improvement contracts.
- [House Bill 513](#) (Representatives Beth Lear and Meredith Craig): To allow political subdivisions, special districts, and state institutions of higher education to elect to apply the Prevailing Wage Law to public improvement projects and to increase the threshold amount that triggers application of the Law to certain state public improvements.
- [House Bill 514](#) (Representatives Mark Hiner and Sean Brennan): To specify that a video, taken by a public office depicting a minor at a public recreational facility with water activities, is not a public record, and is subject to restricted release, and to

prohibit a sexually oriented offender or child-victim oriented offender from establishing or maintaining a library box.

- [House Bill 515](#) (Representative Josh Williams): Regarding the composition of boards of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services and regarding board contracts.
- [House Bill 520](#) (Representatives Ty Mathews and David Thomas): To establish and convene a Blue Ribbon Committee in each county to review and assess each taxing unit within the county and each county program or department to identify duplication of services and generally to streamline and improve county efficiency and effectiveness.
- [House Bill 522](#) (Representatives Kevin Ritter and Adam Bird): Regarding federal mineral royalty payments.
- [Senate Bill 291](#) (Senators Nathan Manning and Michele Reynolds): To change the maximum periods of community control sanctions authorized for felonies and misdemeanors and to modify the confinement sanctions authorized for a technical violation of community control sanction conditions.
- [Senate Bill 293](#) (Senators Theresa Gavarone and Andrew Brenner): To require all marked absent voter's ballots to be delivered to the board of elections by the close of the polls on Election Day in order to be counted.

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, October 21

[House Ways and Means](#) (2:00 p.m.)

- [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.
 - Ninth hearing, all testimony
 - **POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTE BILL**
 - **POSSIBLE VOTE**
- [House Bill 335](#) (Representative David Thomas): To modify the law governing county budget commissions, property taxation, county sales taxation, and alternative apportionment formulas for local government and public library funds.
 - Fifth hearing, no testimony
 - **POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS**
 - **POSSIBLE VOTE**

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

- [Senate Bill 195](#) (Senator Tim Schaffer): To make changes regarding volunteer fire departments and volunteer firefighters and to make an appropriation.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [Senate Bill 240](#) (Senator Kent Smith): To authorize a county excise tax on the sale of adult-use marijuana to support artistic, cultural, and entertainment opportunities.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [Senate Bill 255](#) (Senators Hearcel Craig and Michele Reynolds): To provide grants for qualifying applicants for mortgage, property tax, and utility bill assistance.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Wednesday, October 22

[House Veterans and Military Development](#) (10:30 a.m.)

- [House Bill 297](#) (Representatives Kevin Ritter and Johnathan Newman): To increase the amount a county may provide to military and veterans organizations for Memorial Day expenses.
 - Third hearing, opponent testimony

[House Development](#) (11:00 a.m.)

- [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.
 - Second hearing, no testimony
 - **POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTE BILL**

[Senate Local Government](#) (11:00 a.m.)

- [House Bill 129](#) (Representatives David Thomas): To generally include fixed-sum levies in the calculation of a school district's millage floor and to authorize, with limitations, school district fixed-sum levies.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 309](#) (Representatives David Thomas): To modify the law governing county budget commissions and property taxation.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [House Bill 124](#) (Representatives David Thomas and Thomas Hall): To modify the process for property tax sales-assessment ratio studies.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony

[House General Government](#) (11:45 a.m.)

- [Senate Bill 4](#) (Senator Theresa Gavarone): To establish the Election Integrity Unit in the Office of the Secretary of State and to modify the law governing the prosecution of Election Law violations.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony