STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Senate adds SNAP administration funding to address error rate to clean up bill

Background

Earlier this year, the federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act of 2025 included several changes to funding for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), including some that will affect county costs. These changes will take effect in future federal fiscal years (FFY), which run from October 1 to September 30.

Beginning on October 1, 2026, the federal share of administrative costs will decrease from 50% to 25%. The state and counties split the state portion of administrative costs roughly 52% by the state and 48% by counties through the JFS mandated share. The decrease in the federal administrative cost share is estimated to increase county costs through the mandated share by about $47 million annually.

Additionally, a new cost sharing system will be implemented for the cost of benefits. Currently, the cost of actual SNAP benefits that recipients receive is carried entirely by the federal government. Beginning on October 1, 2027, the cost share between the federal government and the state will depend on a state's SNAP error rate. The error rate is the percentage of cases where the benefit is incorrect, either through under or overpayment, as determined by a random sampling of cases.

Federal/State Split of SNAP Benefit Costs Based on Error Rate			
Error Rate	Federal Share of Benefit Costs	State Share of Benefit Costs	Estimated Annual Ohio Cost
Less than 6%	100%	0%	$0 million
6% to 7.9%	95%	5%	$160 million
8.0% to 9.9%	90%	10%	$320 million
Greater than 10%	85%	15%	$480 million

In FFY 2024, Ohio's error rate was 9.1%. As the table above shows, that error rate would require the state to pick up 10% of the cost, or approximately $320 million annually. Since states paying a portion of SNAP benefits is a new policy, it is currently unknown how the state cost would be split between the state government and counties.

Additional background information on the changes in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act can be found in a webinar that CCAO held earlier this year. The webinar recording and slide deck are available at the respective links.

State Action

To lower the state's error rate, during the Senate Finance Committee's hearing this week, increased funding for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services was included in House Bill 434, a budget clean-up bill (see following article for other clean up items).

The Senate appropriated an additional $21 million in SFY 2026 for upgrades to the Ohio Benefits system. Ohio Benefits is the system that the state uses to coordinate and administer benefits, so the funding is intended to enhance the system to reduce errors from occurring.

An additional $14.8 million was added to ODJFS administration funding, also with the intent to reduce error rates. Within 90 days of the bill's effective date, ODJFS must develop a methodology and technical system to determine payment error rates within SNAP. The system is required to distinguish errors that occur from county agencies, from clients receiving assistance, and from the Ohio Benefits system itself.

No appropriations were made directly to counties to address the looming increased administrative costs or to reduce the error rate at the county level. According to Senate Finance Chairman Jerry Cirino, the Senate wanted to make initial investments at the state level before considering what assistance the state should provide county agencies. Chairman Cirino did indicate, however, that the Senate was not done examining the issue.

The Senate later passed House Bill 434 and sent the bill back to the House of Representatives to consider the budget clean-up amendments. The House is expected to vote on concurrence next week.

CCAO is continuing to work with the Ohio Job and Family Services Director's Association on educating the General Assembly about the county ramifications of the federal SNAP changes. If you have questions about HB 434 or the Association's advocacy efforts, please contact the Policy Team.

Senate adds budget clean-up items to House bills

In addition to the SNAP administration appropriation discussed in an earlier article, the Senate made several other small clean-ups to provisions that were enacted in the state operating budget. The following are of note to counties:

- Clarifies that the local option (“piggyback”) homestead exemption is given to all current homestead recipients. Language in the enacted budget was unclear about if the “grandfathered” population (those who received the exemption before means testing was implemented) would receive the credit.

- Removes a prohibition on the use of court special projects funds from being used for training outside of the state. Funds can be used on training anywhere in the continental United States.

- Removes a scoring component in the Workforce Housing Project Grant Program that favored one type of water pipe over another.

In other budget clean-up news, the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee adopted an amendment to House Bill 10 that contains language allowing counties to hire more than one deputy apiarist.

During the budget, CCAO supported this amendment as it will allow counties more flexibility to staff their offices to fit the needs of their county. The provision was accidentally omitted from the final enacted budget.

Washington County, CCAO testify on bill to allocate federal mineral royalties to counties

This week, House Bill 522 (Representatives Kevin Ritter and Adam Bird), a bill to require all federal mineral royalties received from the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of Natural Resources Revenue to be transferred to the county where the applicable royalty was derived from, received its second hearing.

Washington County Commissioner Charlie Schilling testified to the House Natural Resources Committee on the impact that counties retaining the federal royalty payments would have on Washington County. In 2022, the state received just under $713,000 from federal royalty payments attributable to oil and gas reserves in Washington County, but the payment the county received was about $134,200, or about 19% of the total.

If the county retained the full payment, Commissioner Schilling shared that the county would be able to repave rural roads that are strained by the heavy vehicles needed for mineral extraction and modernize emergency service equipment, among other service improvements.

CCAO Managing Director of Policy Adam Schwiebert also provided written proponent testimony on the bill. He highlighted the simplicity and transparency of the bill, as well as the importance of ensuring that local communities retain revenue generated from their resources.

Other local entities that provided proponent testimony to the committee include the Monroe County Treasurer and the Southeastern Ohio Port Authority.

CCAO testifies on public pension pickup legislation

This week, CCAO submitted [written opponent testimony] on [House Bill 473] (Representative David Thomas), which would prohibit public employers from offering fringe-benefit pension pickups.

While the practice is not widely used among counties, CCAO expressed concern that removing this tool would limit counties' ability to recruit and retain employees in a competitive labor market. Counties often struggle to match private-sector wages, particularly for specialized positions in engineering, IT, and finance. Pension pickup arrangements can help counties remain competitive without significant salary increases.

CCAO also noted that public employee compensation, including pension pickups, is already subject to public disclosure through budget documents, public records, and collective bargaining agreements. If increased transparency is desired, CCAO believes it can be achieved through reporting requirements rather than eliminating a lawful compensation tool.

Additionally, the testimony highlighted that eliminating fringe-benefit pickups could unintentionally increase costs for counties and taxpayers. Replacing a pickup with equivalent salary increase would trigger higher employer pension and Medicare contributions, resulting in greater long-term expenses.

Other entities that testified as opponents at the hearing include the Fraternal Order of Police, the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters.

Additional hearings on HB 473 are expected in the House Public Insurance and Pensions Committee. If you have questions about HB 473, please contact Managing Director of Policy Adam Schwiebert.

Ohio Redistricting Commission adopts bipartisan Congressional map

Earlier today, the Ohio Redistricting Commission officially adopted a new congressional district map, establishing the state's federal House of Representatives map for the remainder of the decade. The map will first be used in the 2026 election.

The partisan breakdown of the new map potentially shifts Ohio's congressional delegation makeup from 10 Republican members and five Democratic members to 12 Republican Members and three Democratic members.

The notable changes to the current map are found in the 1st, 9th, and 13th districts. The new map's the partisan index in the 1st and 9th districts have a partisan index pointing towards a hypothetical Republican. The 1st District is estimated to contain a 54% to 47% (R to D) split and the 9th District's split is an estimated 54.4% to 45.5% (R to D).

The map makes the 13th District a more Democratic leaning district, with a 52% to 48% (D to R) split.

The 1st District, currently held by U.S. Rep. Greg Landsman, adds Clinton County and much of the western edge of Hamilton County.

The map adds Henry, Paulding and Putnam counties in Northwest Ohio to the 9th District, currently held by U.S. Rep Marcy Kaptur, while shifting Sandusky County from the 9th District to the 5th District, currently held by U.S. Rep. Bob Latta.

The 13th District, currently held by U.S. Rep Emilia Sykes, picks up a small portion of Portage County, but remains mostly encompassing Summit County and the portion of Stark County containing the city of Canton.

The map will be in effect for the rest of the decade since it received bipartisan support. However, it is possible that the map will receive constitutional challenges in the court system. CCAO will keep members informed should such a challenge develop.

County boards of elections can expect to hear from the Secretary of State's office on how to begin implementing new congressional districts in the coming weeks.

Legislative Activity

Committee Hearings

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

House Local Government

- House Bill 137 (Representative Brian Lorenz): To authorize a taxing authority to decline to submit a requested library levy or general health district levy to voters.
    - Fourth hearing, opponent testimony from the Cincinnati/Hamilton County Public Library and the Delaware County District Library, and interested party testimony from the Lorain Public Library System.
    - **FAVORABLY REPORTED**

House Transportation

- House Bill 251 (Representative Bernard Willis): To establish requirements related to the use of an unmanned aerial vehicle by law enforcement and to expressly incorporate additional aviation facilities into the Aeronautics Law.
    - Fifth hearing, interested party testimony from the ACLU
    - **FAVORABLY REPORTED**

House Public Safety

- House Bill 371 (Representatives Phil Plummer and Tom Young): To make elected officials mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.
    - Second hearing, no witnesses

    - **AMENDED** to eliminate the requirement that individuals subject to mandatory reporting laws be acting in an official or professional capacity to report child abuse or neglect.

House General Government

- 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

House Government Oversight

- House Bill 481 (Representatives Sarah Fowler Arthur and Beryl Brown Piccolantonio): To allow a public body to meet in an executive session to discuss the performance of a public employee or official.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony from FGA Action and Honest Elections Project Action and opponent testimony from the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association, the League of Woman Voters, and eight private individuals.

House Technology and Innovation

- House Bill 413 (Representatives Tom Young and Bob Peterson): To create the Ohio Local Government Expenditure Database and require political subdivision participation, to require the state retirement systems to participate in the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database, and to make an appropriation.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony from Americans for Prosperity-Ohio and interested party testimony from the Ohio Municipal League and the Buckeye Institute.

Senate Ways and Means

- Senate Bill 275 (Senators Hearcel Craig and Michele Reynolds): To allow eligible homeowners to defer the payment of a portion of their property taxes.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- Senate Bill 285 (Senator Tim Schaffer): To exempt agricultural land converted to certain conservation uses from recoupment charges.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- Senate Bill 206 (Senator Al Cutrona): To authorize a property tax reduction for certain owner occupied homes.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Senate Local Government

- 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 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.

    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- 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.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the County Auditors Association, Americans for Prosperity-Ohio, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, and Ohio Realtors
- House Bill 309 (Representatives David Thomas): To modify the law governing county budget commissions and property taxation.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the County Auditors Association and Americans for Prosperity-Ohio
- House Bill 124 (Representatives David Thomas and Thomas Hall): To modify the process for property tax sales-assessment ratio studies.
    - Third hearing, no witnesses

Senate General Government

- Senate Bill 293 (Senator Theresa Gavarone): 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.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony from Honest Elections Project Action
    - **AMENDED** to remove Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absent Voting Act voters from the bill's requirement.
- Senate Bill 153 (Senators Theresa Gavarone and Andrew Brenner): To require verification of an elector's citizenship before the elector may vote and to modify procedures regarding voter registration, voter roll maintenance, absent voting, and election petitions.
    - Fourth hearing, proponent testimony from the Secretary of State, Honest Elections Project Action and FGA Action; opponent testimony from the League of Women Voters and 112 other organizations and private individuals; and interested party testimony from the Ohio Association of Election officials, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, and Disability Rights Ohio.

House Ways and Means

- House Bill 215 (Representatives Dontavious Jarrells and Jason Stephens): To prohibit property tax levies from taking effect in the current year.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- House Bill 330 (Representatives Kellie Deeter and Tex Fischer): To authorize a sales tax holiday for firearm safety and storage devices
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- House Bill 404 (Representatives Jack Daniels and Brian Lorenz): To authorize a sales tax credit for the trade-in value of certain goods.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- House Bill 540 (Representatives Justin Pizzulli and David Thomas): To require payments in lieu of taxes from certain conservation organizations.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony

Introduction of Bills

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

- House Bill 549 (Representative Brian Lorenz): To regulate cigar bars and to exempt cigars smoked on the premises of a cigar bar from sales and use tax.
- House Bill 554 (Representatives David Thomas): To require government entities and private sellers to accept cash as payment in certain circumstances.
- Senate Bill 307 (Senator Jane Timken): To allow funding for police and firefighting facilities in tax increment financing arrangements.
- Senate Bill 312 (Senator Kristina Roegner): Regarding federal mineral royalty payments.

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, November 4

House Public Safety (9:30 a.m.)

- House Bill 346 (Representatives Mathew Kishman and Josh Williams): To require mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect to report to both a peace officer and the public children services agency.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- House Bill 371 (Representatives Phil Plummer and Tom Young): To make elected officials mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect.
    - Third hearing, all testimony
    - **POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS**

House Children and Human Services (10:30 a.m.)

- House Bill 532 (Representative Kevin Miller): To require a public children services agency to take immediate custody of specified children who cannot be released to a parent, guardian, or custodian.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony.

House Transportation (3:45 p.m.)

- House Bill 389 (Representatives Joe Miller and David Thomas): To eliminate the additional registration fee applicable to hybrid motor vehicles.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony

Senate Local Government (4:00 p.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.
    - Third hearing, opponent testimony and interested party testimony
- House Bill 309 (Representatives David Thomas): To modify the law governing county budget commissions and property taxation.
    - Third hearing, opponent testimony and interested party testimony
- Senate Bill 281 (Senator Kristina Roegner): To authorize a board of county commissioners, on its own behalf, to award a franchise for the operation of a public transit system.
    - First hearing, sponsor testimony and proponent testimony

Wednesday, November 5

House Natural Resources (9:00 a.m.)

- House Bill 522 (Representatives Kevin Ritter and Adam Bird): Regarding federal mineral royalty payments
    - Third hearing, opponent testimony and interested party testimony
    - POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS

House Development (9:45 a.m.)

- House Bill 284 (Representatives Mark Hiner and Erika White): To require iron or steel that is produced in the United States be used on projects supported by state funds.
    - Third hearing, all testimony
    - POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS

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

- House Bill 540 (Representatives Justin Pizzulli and David Thomas): To require payments in lieu of taxes from certain conservation organizations.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony
    - POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTE BILL

Senate Local Government (2:30 p.m.)

- House Bill 124 (Representatives David Thomas and Thomas Hall): To modify the process for making property tax sales-assessment ratio studies.
    - Fourth hearing, all testimony
    - POSSIBLE VOTE
- 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.
    - Second hearing, proponent testimony
- 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.
    - Second hearing. proponent testimony