



# Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

## Monthly Legislative Update

MAY 2015

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Mid-Ohio Regional  
Planning Commission





## TOP ADVOCACY ITEMS

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Status</i>
Secure Federal Funding for Regional Projects	U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced that \$500 million will be made available for transportation projects this year under a seventh round of the <a href="#">Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)</a> competitive grant program. TIGER grants fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that have a significant impact on the nation, a region, or a metropolitan area. The pre-application deadline was 11:59 p.m. ET on May 4. The final application deadline is 11:59 p.m. ET on June 5.
Establish MORPC as Top MPO Resource for Ohio Congressional Delegation on Transportation Issues	With federal MAP-21 funding set to expire May 31st, MORPC sent a letter to the Central Ohio Congressional delegation to urge for re-authorization in the form of a long-term funding bill that includes all modes of transportation under the Highway Trust Fund. Congress is currently searching for funding for a short-term extension that could be approved this month.
Promote Energy Efficiency and Conservation, as Well as Renewable and Alternative Energy	MORPC testified in the House Public Utilities committee in favor of HB 72 (Energy Improvement Districts) that authorizes port authorities to create energy special improvement districts (eSIDs) and increases the overall flexibility of how the districts can be organized and operate.  MORPC continues to monitor the Energy Mandates Study Committee that came out of SB310. The House and Senate have appointed their members to the study committee, which met twice so far in 2015.
Explore Possibility of Passing Legislation to Increase Local Government License Plate Fees for Funding Infrastructure	A task force of MORPC members has been formed to provide more focus on this issue and to educate local legislators on local governments' need for more transportation funding. Working with statewide associations representing local governments, MORPC has tried to insert provisions increasing the cap on license fees in the transportation budget ( <a href="#">HB53</a> ) and the operating budget (Sub. <a href="#">HB64</a> ).



### TOP NEWS IN OHIO

#### ***HB72 – Energy Improvement Districts – MORPC Testifies***

Christina O’Keeffe, MORPC’s director of energy and air quality, recently offered proponent testimony during a hearing on House Bill 72 before the House Public Utilities Committee. She said the agency has long worked with Franklin County residents on energy efficiency improvements to their homes and with manufacturers on reduced energy and operational costs.

“Most recently, in 2014, MORPC released the country’s first-of-its-kind Regional Energy Action Plan in partnership with the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC),” O’Keeffe said. She said “core” Central Ohio communities also support energy special improvement districts (E-SIDS) as a tool for redeveloping commercial and industrial properties.

#### ***State Operating Budget – HB64***

- » On April 22, the House passed its version of the state budget (HB64 (Smith R)) by a 63-35 margin that included opposition from 5 Republicans and support from 3 Democrats, proposing over \$70 billion per year this biennium.
- » The bill modifies the executive proposals on personal income tax reductions, and removes all major tax changes in the Governor’s proposal, including sales tax increase and expansion, severance tax increase, cigarette tax increase, and CAT increase (with the exception of means testing retirement income).
- » MORPC submitted interested party written testimony to the House Finance Committee on amending the proposed Service Station Cleanup Fund. We provided three proposed efficiencies that will help maximize dollars and enhance the program’s outcome. The revisions were not included in the House passed version, therefore we are coordinating with other interested parties and working on educating Senators on the importance of these suggested changes. MORPC will submit interested party testimony to the Senate Finance Committee that reinforces our position on these three enhancements to the program.
- » The bill is now in the Senate, where the Finance, Ways and Means and Medicaid committees will address the budget. But, Senate leadership has made clear that neither the executive proposal nor the As-Passed version of the bill will necessarily be the starting points for their deliberations. Under Ohio’s Constitution, a balanced budget must be enacted by July 1 of this year.

#### **Taxes**

- » Reduces the Governor’s proposed 23% across-the-board reduction in income tax rates to 6.3%, lowering the top rate from 5.33% to 4.997%
- » Makes permanent the 75% small business tax deduction
- » Creates the Ohio 2020 Tax Policy Study Commission to take a larger, more comprehensive look at Ohio’s tax policies in comparison to other states.
- » Eliminates the political contribution tax credit.

#### **Other Areas of Note**

- » Creates the Local Government Safety Capital Grant Program to provide grants of up to \$100,000 to help local governments pay for public safety related capital costs, providing \$20M over the biennium for this purpose.
- » Removes language that prevents the boundaries of win-win agreements from being changed without both parties agreeing.
- » Creates the Ohio Military Facilities Commission to provide \$5 million over the biennium to military installations in Ohio to ensure that they are prepared for the upcoming Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC).



### TOP NEWS IN OHIO

- » Creates a grant program for capital improvements for county and independent fairgrounds with a 2:1 state match.
- » Raises the competitive bidding threshold for a conservancy district from \$25,000 to \$50,000.
- » Authorizes municipalities and townships to create a tourism development district and levy an admission or development fee or a sales tax with county approval to support tourism promotion and development.
- » Allows a county to contract with a private company to manage a county jail facility.
- » Permits the township trustees in a township of over 15,000 to extend a TIF in place before 1995 for an additional 15 years.
- » Specifies that taxpayers suing regarding actions or omissions on municipal income tax can sue the municipal corporation, but not the tax administrator.
- » Permits commissioners in a county of between 375,000 and 390,000 to create a regional arts and culture district and to levy a cigarette and alcoholic beverage tax, with voter approval, in support of such a district.
- » Corrects several provisions for House Bill 5 from the 130th GA, including: Makes consistent with federal, state and current municipal law the due date for entities with a fiscal year end other than a calendar year end, specifies that related to entities that do not file for a federal extension yet still need a municipal return extension, and requires municipal corporations to publish a summary of the taxpayers rights and responsibilities online.
- » Eliminates county and transit authorities' requirements to reimburse vendors for the expense of adjusting cash registers when they change their sales tax rate.
- » Increases a line item for Airport Improvements by \$5.25 M per year for loans and grants to airports. Requires ODOT to work to draft legislation that moves aviation fuel from the sales tax to the gas tax by June 30, 2017.
- » Grants counties the permission to enter into sale/leaseback agreements.
- » Authorizes township trustees to purchase real or personal property at an auction through a designee by resolution.
- » Allows a township to contract with the state or political subdivision for the purchase or sale of a motor vehicle.
- » Requires any subdivision that has red light cameras to file a report with the Auditor of State which would account for total fines collected.
- » Requires all colleges participating in the College Credit Plus Program to offer an association degree pathway.
- » Provides that local school districts will not receive less foundation funding than they did in FY '15
- » Includes reforms to the Medicaid program including cost transparency measures, requiring the Department of Medicaid to seek waivers to allow health savings accounts and work requirements, mandating a report of the clinical care and outcomes of the expansion population, and returning eligibility determinations to the General Assembly.
- » Restricts 2- and 4-year schools to raise tuition by no more than 2% or \$100 and 2% or \$200 next year, and prohibits a state institution of higher education from charging an overload fee for taking more than a certain number of credit hours except under certain circumstances.



## TOP NEWS IN OHIO

### ***Governor Signs Outdoor Refreshment District Bill***

On April 30, Governor John Kasich signed HB47, which will allow certain cities to create Outdoor Refreshment Districts, where open containers are permitted within a specified area of an Ohio community. Passed as an emergency measure, it became effective immediately meaning the districts are available to cities in time for large summer events.

“This law will help create economic opportunity for our communities while growing local Ohio businesses. These districts will become destination spots which will create excitement and provide a critical mass of customers for the restaurants, bars and shops in the district and nearby,” Representative Denise Driehaus (D-Cincinnati) said in a prepared statement.

The new law will allow cities with a population of over 35,000 to apply for Outdoor Refreshment District areas within their cities. Specifically, it will allow cities with a population between 35,000 and 50,000 to create one Outdoor Refreshment District, while cities with over 50,000 will have the opportunity to create two. After two years, cities with populations of less than 35,000 will be permitted to create a district if they meet certain requirements.

“This bill is all about economic development and bringing businesses to Ohio,” said Representative Lou Blessing III (R-Cincinnati). “There is a reason the last couple of Super Bowls were in cities that temporarily lifted the ban of open containers in certain areas. We are relieving Ohio’s cities from the red tape that they will encounter for the Major League Baseball All-Star game in Cincinnati and the Republican National Convention in Cleveland. This will also bring other great opportunities to Ohio as the wide variety of organizations won’t have to go through all the red tape as in other states.”

The law requires that before applying for permits, cities must adopt public health and safety requirements for the districts, including the specific boundaries of the area, hours of operation and a sanitation plan that will help maintain the appearance and public health of the area.

### ***State + National Unemployment***

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Ohio’s unemployment rate remained at 5.1 percent for March, the third straight month of no change for the number. The number of workers unemployed in Ohio in March was 295,000, an increase of 5,000 from 290,000 in February. The number of unemployed has decreased by 50,000 in the past 12 months from 345,000. The March unemployment rate for Ohio was down from 6.0 percent in March 2014.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 223,000 in April, and the unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.4 percent. Job gains occurred in professional and business services, health care, and construction. Mining employment continued to decline.



## **NEW BILLS INTRODUCED**

### **HB150 (Hotel Sales-Use Tax)**

On April 13, Representatives Cheryl Grossman and Gary Scherer co-sponsored HB150, legislation seeking to require hotel intermediaries to collect and remit applicable sales and use tax on the full amount paid for hotel lodging, to require hotel intermediaries to supply customers with itemized invoices, to specify that a hotel intermediary is presumed to have “substantial nexus” with Ohio if the intermediary arranges lodging at Ohio hotels, and to specify that hotels are not liable for the failure of a hotel intermediary to properly collect or remit applicable taxes.

### **HB154 (Bicycle Passing Distance-Malfunctioning Traffic Lights)**

Representatives Michael Henne and Michael Sheehy co-sponsored HB154, a bill to provide that when a motor vehicle passes a bicycle the safe passing distance to the left is three feet, and to alter the protocol for proceeding into an intersection that has malfunctioning traffic lights.

### **H159 (Rear License Plate)**

On April 21, Representatives Terry Johnson and Bill Patmon co-sponsored HB159. The bill aims to require that motor vehicles carry only one license plate to be displayed on the rear of the vehicle, and to amend the version of section of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2017, to continue the provisions of this act on and after that effective date.

### **HB176 (Gas-Fuel Conversion Program)**

Representatives David Hall and Sean O’Brien co-sponsored HB176 on April 28. The legislation seeks to create the Gaseous Fuel Vehicle Conversion Program, to allow a credit against the income or commercial activity tax for the purchase or conversion of an alternative fuel vehicle, to reduce the amount of sales tax due on the purchase or lease of a qualifying electric vehicle by up to \$500, to apply the motor fuel tax to the distribution or sale of compressed natural gas, to authorize a temporary, partial motor fuel tax exemption for sales of compressed natural gas used as motor fuel, and to make an appropriation. Transit agencies will remain exempt from paying the motor fuel tax.

### **HB180 (Residency Requirements)**

On April 29, Representative Ron Maag introduced HB180, a bill seeking to prohibit a public authority from requiring a contractor to employ a certain percentage of individuals from the geographic area of the public authority for the construction or professional design of a public improvement.

### **HB182 (Joint Economic Development Districts)**

Representative Kirk Schuring introduced HB182 on April 30. The legislation would revise the law governing the creation and operation of joint economic development districts (JEDDs) and enterprise zones.

### **HCR13 (Federal Transportation-Enhanced Revenue)**

On April 14, Representative Cheryl Grossman introduced HCR13, a resolution to urge the Congress of the United States to enact a long-term federal transportation funding reauthorization bill that includes enhanced revenue.



## NEW BILLS INTRODUCED

### ***SB152 (Geographic Employment Requirements)***

Senator Joe Uecker introduced SB152 on April 29, seeking to enact section 9.49 and to repeal sections 153.013 and 5525.26 of the Revised Code to prohibit a public authority from requiring a contractor to employ a certain percentage of individuals from the geographic area of the public authority for the construction or professional design of a public improvement.

### ***SB157 (Bicycle Helmet Requirement)***

On May 5, Senator Shannon Jones introduced SB157, a bill to generally require any person under sixteen years of age to wear a helmet while on a bicycle, to require bicycle rental businesses to inform any person under sixteen years of age who rents a bicycle of this requirement and provide helmet rentals, and to provide limited civil immunity for bicycle rental businesses that comply with these requirements.

## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB5** PUBLIC OFFICE-STATE AGENCY EFFICIENCY STUDIES (KUNZE S, KOEHLER K) To allow the Auditor of State to conduct business case studies regarding the efficiency of local public offices and state agencies, to authorize the Auditor of State to establish a shared equipment service agreement program among political subdivisions, and to specify that a political subdivision that uses the loaned equipment has potential liability for its use under the Political Subdivision Tort Liability Law.  
**Current Status:** 4/29/2015 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 95-0  
**Recent Status:** 4/29/2015 - Bills for Third Consideration; 3/24/2015 - REPORTED OUT, House Local Government, (Fifth Hearing)  
**State Bill Page:** <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-5>
- HB12** TIF-INCENTIVE DISTRICTS (BUTLER, JR. J, BURKLEY T) To establish a procedure by which political subdivisions proposing a tax increment financing (TIF) incentive district are required to provide notice to the record owner of each parcel within the proposed incentive district before creating the district, and to permit such owners, under specific conditions, to exclude their parcels from the incentive district by submitting a written response.  
**Current Status:** 3/17/2015 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
**Recent Status:** 2/10/2015 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means; 1/28/2015 - Introduced  
**State Bill Page:** <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-12>
- HB13** POLICE-FIRE LEVY REVENUE (BUTLER, JR. J, BURKLEY T) To require reimbursement of police and fire levy revenue foregone because of the creation of a tax increment financing incentive district.  
**Current Status:** 3/17/2015 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
**Recent Status:** 1/28/2015 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means; 1/28/2015 - Introduced  
**State Bill Page:** <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-13>



## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB46** GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE DATABASE (DOVILLA M, DEVER J) To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database.  
*Current Status:* 4/22/2015 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance  
*Recent Status:* 4/15/2015 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Vote 95-0; 4/15/2015 - Bills for Third Consideration  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-46>
- HB47** REFRESHMENT AREAS-OPEN CONTAINER EXEMPTION (BLESSING III L, DRIEHAUS D) To allow municipal corporations and townships with a population of more than 25,000 to create outdoor refreshment areas, to exempt persons within such an area from the open container law, and to declare an emergency.  
*Current Status:* 4/30/2015 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; eff. 4/30/2015  
*Recent Status:* 4/29/2015 - Sent to Governor for Signature; 4/29/2015 - Consideration of Senate Amendments; House Does Concur with Senate Amendments, Vote 87-8, Emergency Clause 89-6  
*State Bill Page:*
- HB53** ILLEGAL ALIEN HOUSING AGREEMENTS (ADAMS J, RETHERFORD W) To prohibit state agencies from entering into an agreement with the federal government to provide temporary housing for aliens who are not legally present in the United States.  
*Current Status:* 4/1/2015 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; effective in 90 days  
*Recent Status:* 3/26/2015 - Consideration of Conference Committee Report; House Accepts Conference Committee Report, Vote 82-13; 3/25/2015 - Consideration of Conference Committee Report; Senate Accepts Conference Committee Report, Vote 33-0  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-53>
- HB56** PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT-CRIMINAL RECORDS (SCHURING K, SLESNICK S) To limit the use of criminal records in the hiring and employment practices of public employers.  
*Current Status:* 3/17/2015 - House Commerce and Labor, (Third Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/3/2015 - House Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing); 2/17/2015 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-56>
- HB64** OPERATING BUDGET (SMITH R) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.  
*Current Status:* 5/14/2015 - Senate Medicaid, (Third Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 5/12/2015 - Senate Finance - Workforce Subcommittee, (Third Hearing); 5/7/2015 - Senate Medicaid, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-64>
- HB72** ENERGY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (CONDITT M) To authorize port authorities to create energy special improvement districts for the purpose of developing and implementing plans for special energy improvement projects and to alter the law governing such districts that are governed by a nonprofit corporation.  
*Current Status:* 5/6/2015 - BILL AMENDED, House Public Utilities, (Fourth Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/18/2015 - House Public Utilities, (Third Hearing); 3/11/2015 - House Public Utilities, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-72>



## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB82** RIGHT-OF-WAY PENALTIES INCREASE (BEAGLE B) To increase the penalties for failing to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian who is crossing a roadway within a crosswalk when the crosswalk is located within a school zone.  
*Current Status:* 4/29/2015 - House State Government, (Second Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/18/2015 - House State Government, (First Hearing); 3/3/2015 - Referred to Committee House State Government  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-82>
- HB84** MUNICIPAL TAX-CIVIL ACTIONS (SPRAGUE R, SWEENEY M) To require civil actions by taxpayers related to municipal income taxes be brought against the municipal corporation imposing the tax rather than the municipal corporation's tax administrator.  
*Current Status:* 3/24/2015 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/3/2015 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means; 2/25/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-84>
- HB86** DISTRACTED DRIVING (GROSSMAN C) To create the offense of "distracted driving" and to limit its application and prosecution to persons who also commit a moving violation or a vehicular homicide offense at the same time as the distracted driving offense.  
*Current Status:* 3/26/2015 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED, House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/3/2015 - Referred to Committee House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety; 2/25/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-86>
- HB88** ELECTRONIC DEVICES-DRIVING (SHEEHY M) To prohibit the use of an electronic wireless communications device while operating a vehicle in a school zone during hours when children are present outside or in a construction zone during hours of actual work, to specify that the offenses related to the use of a handheld electronic wireless communications device while driving apply to the operation of all vehicles rather than all motor vehicles as under current law, and to make driving a vehicle while using a handheld electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text-based communication a primary rather than secondary traffic offense.  
*Current Status:* 3/26/2015 - House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/3/2015 - Referred to Committee House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety; 2/25/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-88>
- HB100** VEHICLE WEIGHT LIMITS (SLABY M, PATMON B) To require that a vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating or an actual gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds be driven only in either of the two right-hand lanes of a freeway with three lanes of travel in the same direction, except in limited circumstances.  
*Current Status:* 3/24/2015 - House Transportation and Infrastructure, (Second Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/17/2015 - House Transportation and Infrastructure, (First Hearing); 3/10/2015 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Infrastructure  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-100>



## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB130** PUBLIC RECORDS-DATA BOARD (HAGAN C, DUFFEY M) To create the DataOhio Board, to specify requirements for posting public records online, to require the Auditor of State to adopt rules regarding a uniform accounting system for public offices, to establish an online catalog of public data at data.Ohio.gov, to establish the Local Government Information Exchange Grant Program, and to make an appropriation.  
*Current Status:* 4/29/2015 - House State Government, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 4/14/2015 - Referred to Committee House State Government; 3/24/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-130>
- HB150** HOTEL SALES-USE TAX (GROSSMAN C, SCHERER G) To require hotel intermediaries to collect and remit applicable sales and use tax on the full amount paid for hotel lodging, to require hotel intermediaries to supply customers with itemized invoices, to specify that a hotel intermediary is presumed to have "substantial nexus" with Ohio if the intermediary arranges lodging at Ohio hotels, and to specify that hotels are not liable for the failure of a hotel intermediary to properly collect or remit applicable taxes.  
*Current Status:* 4/21/2015 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
*Recent Status:* 4/13/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-150>
- HB154** BICYCLE PASSING DISTANCE-MALFUNCTIONING TRAFFIC LIGHTS (HENNE M, SHEEHY M) To provide that when a motor vehicle passes a bicycle the safe passing distance to the left is three feet, and to alter the protocol for proceeding into an intersection that has malfunctioning traffic lights.  
*Current Status:* 5/12/2015 - House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 4/21/2015 - Referred to Committee House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety; 4/13/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-154>
- HB159** REAR LICENSE PLATE (JOHNSON T, PATMON B) To require that motor vehicles carry only one license plate to be displayed on the rear of the vehicle, and to amend the version of section of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2017, to continue the provisions of this act on and after that effective date.  
*Current Status:* 5/12/2015 - House Transportation and Infrastructure, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 4/28/2015 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Infrastructure; 4/21/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-159>
- HB176** GAS-FUEL CONVERSION PROGRAM (HALL D, O'BRIEN S) To create the Gaseous Fuel Vehicle Conversion Program, to allow a credit against the income or commercial activity tax for the purchase or conversion of an alternative fuel vehicle, to reduce the amount of sales tax due on the purchase or lease of a qualifying electric vehicle by up to \$500, to apply the motor fuel tax to the distribution or sale of compressed natural gas, to authorize a temporary, partial motor fuel tax exemption for sales of compressed natural gas used as motor fuel, and to make an appropriation.  
*Current Status:* 5/5/2015 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
*Recent Status:* 4/28/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-176>



## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB180** RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS (MAAG R) To prohibit a public authority from requiring a contractor to employ a certain percentage of individuals from the geographic area of the public authority for the construction or professional design of a public improvement.  
*Current Status:* 5/5/2015 - Referred to Committee House Commerce and Labor  
*Recent Status:* 4/29/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-180>
- HB182** JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS (SCHURING K) To revise the law governing the creation and operation of joint economic development districts (JEDDs) and enterprise zones.  
*Current Status:* 5/13/2015 - House Economic and Workforce Development, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 5/5/2015 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Workforce Development; 4/30/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-182>
- HCR7** TAX EXEMPT MUNICIPAL BONDS (SPRAGUE R) To urge the President and the Congress of the United States to preserve the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.  
*Current Status:* 3/17/2015 - House Local Government, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/4/2015 - Referred to Committee House Local Government; 3/4/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HCR-7>
- HCR9** SUSTAINABLE ENERGY-ABUNDANCE PLAN (BAKER N, BOOSE T) To establish a sustainable energy-abundance plan for Ohio to meet future Ohio energy needs with affordable, abundant, and environmentally friendly energy.  
*Current Status:* 5/6/2015 - ADOPTED BY HOUSE; Vote 96-1  
*Recent Status:* 5/6/2015 - Bills for Third Consideration; 4/29/2015 - REPORTED OUT, House Public Utilities, (Third Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HCR-9>
- HCR13** FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION-ENHANCED REVENUE (GROSSMAN C) To urge the Congress of the United States to enact a long-term federal transportation funding reauthorization bill that includes enhanced revenue.  
*Current Status:* 4/14/2015 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight  
*Recent Status:* 4/14/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HCR-13>
- SB75** AGRITOURISM-ZONING (JONES S, PETERSON B) To limit the authority of a board of county commissioners or board of township trustees to prohibit agritourism through zoning, to apply current agricultural use valuation to land used for agritourism for property tax purposes, and to establish immunity in a civil action for agritourism providers.  
*Current Status:* 3/18/2015 - Senate Civil Justice, (First Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/4/2015 - Referred to Committee Senate Civil Justice; 2/23/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-SB-75>



## MORPC LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- SB95** OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT AREAS-CONTAINER LAW (SEITZ B, THOMAS C) To allow municipal corporations and townships with a population of more than 35,000 to create outdoor refreshment areas, to exempt persons within such an area from the open container law, to create the Outdoor Refreshment Area Study Committee, and to declare an emergency.  
*Current Status:* 4/14/2015 - SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED & REPORTED OUT, Senate State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)  
*Recent Status:* 3/24/2015 - Senate State and Local Government, (Third Hearing); 3/17/2015 - Senate State and Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-SB-95>
- SB152** GEOGRAPHIC EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS (UECKER J) To enact section 9.49 and to repeal sections 153.013 and 5525.26 of the Revised Code to prohibit a public authority from requiring a contractor to employ a certain percentage of individuals from the geographic area of the public authority for the construction or professional design of a public improvement.  
*Current Status:* 4/29/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-SB-152>
- SB157** BICYCLE HELMET REQUIREMENT (JONES S) to generally require any person under sixteen years of age to wear a helmet while on a bicycle, to require bicycle rental businesses to inform any person under sixteen years of age who rents a bicycle of this requirement and provide helmet rentals, and to provide limited civil immunity for bicycle rental businesses that comply with these requirements.  
*Current Status:* 5/5/2015 - Introduced  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-SB-157>
- SJR1** PUBLIC OFFICE COMPENSATION COMMISSION (FABER K) Proposing to amend Sections 4, 20, and 31 of Article II, Section 19 of Article III, and Section 6 of Article IV and to enact Section 20a of Article II of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to establish the Public Office Compensation Commission.  
*Current Status:* 4/22/2015 - ADOPTED BY SENATE; Vote 33-0  
*Recent Status:* 4/22/2015 - Bills for Third Consideration; 4/22/2015 - REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED, Senate Finance, (Fifth Hearing)  
*State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-SJR-1>



## STATE + FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### *State*

#### **State Revenues Up in April**

State revenues soared in April, coming in 13.6 percent over estimates, according to preliminary figures released by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM). This translated to nearly \$276.1 million over the amount predicted, for a total of \$2.3 billion in tax revenues for the month. The state's fiscal year ends June 30.

For the year, the state is now nearly \$454.1 million or 2.6 percent over estimates, with total revenue of nearly \$17.6 billion. As could be predicted, the personal income tax led the way in April, bringing \$1.2 billion. That was \$227.9 million or 22.9 percent over estimates. For the year, the personal income tax is now nearly \$342.2 million or 5.0 percent over estimates. A total of nearly \$7.2 billion was collected from this tax through April.

Collectively, Ohio's sales tax, the auto and non-auto components, are over estimates for the month and year but the auto sales tax was down in April, coming in 2.1 percent or \$2.8 million below the amount predicted. The non-auto sales tax, however, ran \$35.0 million over estimates for April. In total, the two taxes are nearly \$65.4 million or 0.8 percent over estimates for the year-to-date. To date, a total of nearly \$8.3 billion has been collected through the sales taxes.

Compared to 2014, the state has brought in nearly \$1.1 billion more so far this year. April 2015 revenue also exceeded that of April 2014 by nearly \$396.5 million or 20.8 percent.

#### **Local Government**

On April 29, Senator Joe Uecker and Representative Ron Maag announced companion legislation seeking to prohibit residency requirements local governments implement on contractors and design professionals for public improvement projects. The bills are [SB152](#) and [HB180](#), covered in the New Bills Introduced section of this document.

#### **Taxation**

According to an April 30 ruling by the Ohio Supreme Court, Cleveland's unique method of taxing out-of-town professional athletes is unconstitutional. The court ruled unanimously that Cleveland can no longer charge visiting players a 2 percent municipal income tax, labeled a "jock tax", based on how many games they play in the city.

Of the eight U.S. cities that have a jock tax – Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis – only Cleveland had been using a "games-played" formula. It's estimated that the decision will cost Cleveland at least \$1 million per year.

#### **Ohio BWC Transitions to Prospective Billing**

On May 1, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors approved a plan to allow private employers to pay for their annual workers' compensation premiums in two, four, six or 12 installments as part of its move to a new prospective billing system. The BWC will be transitioning to the new system on July 1, 2015 for private employers, and July 1, 2016 for public employers. Visit the BWC website or click [here](#) for more prospective billing information and resources.

#### **TourismOhio Travel App**

TourismOhio has introduced a new travel app, travel guide and calendar of events to help Ohioans and Ohio visitors plan their next getaway in the state. The free "Official Ohio Travel Guide" app for 2015 is available from the Apple App or Google Play stores for any mobile device, or at the agency's [website](#).



## STATE + FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

### *Federal*

#### **It is “Go Time” for the Transportation Reauthorization Bill**

The funding authorization for the Federal Highway Trust Fund expires at the end of the month. As a result, Congress is working on legislation to extend the authorization.

While it is almost certain that some legislation will be passed this month, it is far from certain what the contents of this legislation will be. There are two leading approaches that are being discussed on Capitol Hill:

1. Pass a bill that will forestall the expiration of the transportation reauthorization until the end of July, thereby forcing Congress to take action on a longer term bill before the beginning of summer break.
2. Pass a longer-term stop-gap bill that would authorize the funding of transportation until the end of the calendar year. This approach would either force Congress to pass a long-term bill or another stop-gap bill in 2016.

MORPC has been working with our Congressional delegation to secure passage of a bill that provides funding for all modes of transportation as well as preserving and growing the role that metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like MORPC play in transportation funding and planning.

#### **Energy Efficiency Legislation Passes Senate**

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2015, [S.128](#), legislation authored by U.S. Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and designed to provide incentives to cut energy use in commercial buildings, manufacturing plants and home, was signed into law by President Obama on April 30.



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