**Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts
*Legislative Report – February 2023***

**GOVERNMENTAL POLICY GROUP, INC.
RH RESOURCES**

**State Transportation Budget – F.Y. 2024-2025**

The State Transportation Budget for F.Y. 2024-2025, or [HB 23](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb23), has officially made its way through the Ohio House. Before receiving a full floor vote, the House Finance Committee adopted an [omnibus amendment](https://ohiohouse.gov/committees/finance/meetings/cmte_h_finance_1_2023-02-28-1000_146) to the $12.6 billion measure just one day prior. Among other things, the omnibus amendment reduces the additional registration fee for plug-in hybrid electric motor vehicles, lowering the annual fee from $200 to $100 beginning in 2024. Also included in the omnibus were several provisions relating to rail and train safety in light of the recent East Palestine derailment; such as provisions that require a person who receives a message regarding a defect detected by a wayside detector system to immediately notify the operator of the applicable train. The omnibus amendment also cut several provisions that were previously included in the bill along the committee process. One of the cuts included eliminating controversial language aimed at blocking a bike lane project in Cleveland and a provision on accessible parking laws. Other changes made to the bill include:

* Clarifies that the bill's current prohibition against a county or township using a traffic camera applies only to the use of traffic cameras for civil enforcement of red light or speeding offenses.
* Requires the PUCO and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to prepare and submit a written report to the General Assembly, within 90 days of the bill's effective date, pertaining to the transportation of hazardous materials and hazardous waste.
* Expands an exception to existing window tinting prohibitions to allow a law enforcement agency to use tinted windows for any vehicle used within the scope of an agency's duties.
* Prohibits park district property from being included in a special improvement district.
* Alters the deputy registrar/BMV service fee due when an applicant permanently registers a noncommercial trailer from the equivalent of a single fee – currently $5 - to the equivalent of eight times that fee.
* Clarifies that if a conditional use is required instead of a permitted use in a county or township zoning resolution to allow certain aggregate mineral mining activities under the bill, that conditional use must be approved through the board of zoning appeals.
* Specifies that the rural highway fund is aimed at federal or state highways in counties that do not contain a municipality with a population greater than 65,000 and excludes projects on interstate highways.

The bill largely received bipartisan support from the House Finance Committee before being reported, with the only major concerns coming from questions regarding the rural highway transportation project funds. HB 23 was then passed on the House floor by a vote of 74-21, and will now head to the Senate for further consideration.

**State Operating Budget – F.Y. 2024-2025**

The State Operating Budget for F.Y. 2024-2025has been formally introduced by House Finance Committee Chair Rep. Jay Edwards (R-Nelsonville). The budget bill, [HB 33](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb33),has already received several informal hearings before the House Finance Committee and subcommittees. Ohio Office of Budget and Management ([OBM](https://obm.ohio.gov/areas-of-interest/budget-and-planning/03_operating-budget/01-fiscal-years-2024-2025)) Director Kimberly Murneiks kicked off the hearings with over three hours of [testimony](https://archives.obm.ohio.gov/Files/Budget_and_Planning/Operating_Budget/Fiscal_Years_2024-2025/Testimony/Operating_Budget_Testimony_House_Fiscal_Years_2022-2023.pdf) and questions on key points included in the budget proposal before the committee. During her testimony, Director Murnieks reported that the Governor’s executive budget proposal is “conservatively forecast and structurally balanced.” The Legislative Service Commission (LSC) has also released Redbooks outlining agency requests, appropriation spreadsheets, bill analysis’ and more supporting documents on the budget proposal on its website [here](https://www.lsc.ohio.gov/budget/135/main-operating-budget/as-introduced). Traditionally, the House will work on the budget until mid-to-late April before it moves to the Senate for hearings. After the Senate works on the bill for a few weeks, the two chambers will come together to work on the budget in Conference Committee before it is passed to the governor by the end June.

**House GOP Priority Bills**

The Ohio House waited until mid-February to introduce its first batch of bills for the 135th General Assembly, dropping 52 bills and one joint resolution in one day. Ohio House Speaker Jason Stephens (R-Kitts Hill) held a [press conference](https://ohiochannel.org/video/press-conference-unveiling-house-republican-caucus-priority-bills-for-the-135th-general-assembly) on the introductions and to announce that the first 12 bills will serve as the GOP priorities for the 135th GA. Speaker Stephens said during the conference that the priority bills focused on three areas: the economy, families, and education. Leading off the speaker's priority list is legislation ([HB 1](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb1)) he said would "lower and flatten" state taxes by ending the state-funded 10% rollback on local property taxes while also lowering the taxable value of those properties. Other GOP economic priorities wereintroduced as an “intent” bills,meaning the language currently included in the bill acts as a placeholder until the full language becomes available at a later date. Those bills include language of intent that would:

* Invest in community and economic development projects throughout the state ([HB 2](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb2)).
* Bolster affordable housing developments through a state tax credit ([HB 3](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb3)).
* Prevent financial institutions or other businesses from boycotting or discriminating against certain companies or customers ([HB 4](https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb4)).

**Below is a list of legislation we are tracking on your behalf:**

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| **HB2** | **LEGISLATIVE INTENT-STATE FUNDING** (CUTRONA A, UPCHURCH T) To declare the intent of the General Assembly to direct state funds to projects across the state for economic growth and community development. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Finance |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-2> |
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| **HB17** | **STATE EMPLOYEE TIKTOK BAN** (SCHMIDT J, SWEARINGEN D) To prohibit state officials, employees, and contractors from using TikTok, WeChat, or any other application or service owned by an entity located in China. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Technology and Innovation |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-17> |
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| **HB23** | **TRANSPORTATION BUDGET** (EDWARDS J) To make appropriations for programs related to transportation for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 3/1/2023 - Bills for Third Consideration |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-23> |
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| **HB31** | **WORKERS' COMPENSATION BUDGET** (EDWARDS J) To amend Section 5 of S.B. 331 of the 133rd General Assembly to rename the Bureau of Workers' Compensation the Department of Workforce Insurance and Safety, to rename other entities who carry out workers' compensation functions in this state, to amend the version of section 3781.10 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on December 29, 2023, to continue the change on and after that date, and to make appropriations for the Department for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025, to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of the Department's programs. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 3/1/2023 - House Insurance, (Second Hearing) |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-31> |
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| **HB32** | **INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION BUDGET** (EDWARDS J) To make appropriations for the Industrial Commission for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of Commission programs. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 3/1/2023 - House Insurance, (Second Hearing) |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-32> |
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| **HB33** | **FY24-25 OPERATING BUDGET** (EDWARDS J) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025, to levy taxes, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 3/2/2023 - House Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee, (Eighth Hearing) |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-33> |
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| **HB41** | **UTILITY BILLING TRANSPARENCY** (SKINDELL M) To enact "The Consumer Utility Billing Transparency Act" requiring the itemization of all riders, taxes, and other costs on certain utility bills. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-41> |
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| **HB64** | **EMINENT DOMAIN LAW CHANGES** (KICK D, CREECH R) To modify the law regarding eminent domain. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/28/2023 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HB-64> |
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| **HCR4** | **TRAINS - HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** (BIRD A, PLUMMER P) To urge the United States Congress to pass legislation requiring railroad companies and the U.S. Department of Transportation to inform local and state government officials when trains carrying potentially hazardous materials travel through their respective jurisdictions. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/21/2023 - Referred to Committee House Government Oversight |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HCR-4> |
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| **HJR1** | **REQUIRE 60 PERCENT VOTE-CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT** (STEWART B) Proposing to amend Sections 1b, 1e, and 1g of Article II and Sections 1 and 3 of Article XVI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to require a vote of at least 60% of the electors to approve any constitutional amendment and to modify the procedures for an initiative petition proposing a constitutional amendment. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/16/2023 - Referred to Committee House Constitutional Resolutions |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HJR-1> |
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| **HR33** | **TRAINS - HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** (ROBB BLASDEL M, MCNALLY L) To urge the United States Congress to pass legislation requiring railroad companies to inform local and state government officials when trains carrying potentially hazardous materials travel through their respective jurisdictions. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/21/2023 - Referred to Committee House Government Oversight |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-HR-33> |
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| **SB3** | **COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROGRAM** (SCHURING K) To create the Ohio Community Revitalization Program, authorizing nonrefundable income tax credits for undertaking community projects. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 1/17/2023 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-SB-3> |
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| **SB10** | **INTERNAL REVENUE CODE CHANGES** (BLESSING III L) To expressly incorporate changes in the Internal Revenue Code since February 17, 2022, into Ohio law and to declare an emergency. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 3/1/2023 - Bills for Third Consideration; (Pending Committee Report) |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-SB-10> |
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| **SB23** | **PURCHASING AUTHORITY-CONSTRUCTION SERVICES** (LANG G) To expand political subdivision joint purchasing authority to expressly include purchases for construction services. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/28/2023 - Senate Government Oversight, (Second Hearing) |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-SB-23> |
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| **SB47** | **LEAVE USE PROHIBITION-UNION ACTIVITIES** (HUFFMAN S) To prohibit a public employer from providing paid leave or compensation for a public employee to engage in certain union activities. |
|   | ***Current Status:*** | 2/8/2023 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary |
|   | ***State Bill Page:*** | <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA135-SB-47> |
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