

Municipal Issues Included in State Operating Budget Bill

The issues below are items the League has identified as impactful to municipalities that are included in the most recent version of Sub. HB 110, the proposed 2022-'23 State Operating Budget bill that was recently passed by the Ohio House of Representatives and is currently being discussed in the Ohio Senate.

Municipal Issues:

- Extends the temporary authorization for public bodies to meet via electronic technology until December 31, 2021.
 - Currently, this authorization expires on July 1, 2021

- Allows municipalities to participate in the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), a federal program whereby states can have eligible debts withheld from a taxpayer's federal income tax return. The Ohio Attorney General's office participates in the program to help recover state debt.
 - The provision would grant municipalities the authority to participate in TOP in order to effectively recover the municipal revenues they are owed, which in turn funds local services. Taxpayers would also benefit from this, as could be saved from paying more than what they originally owe the municipalities because of penalties and interest.

- Allocates \$1.5 million each fiscal year over the biennium for the Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) local fee offset. MARCS enables law enforcement departments to communicate with other law enforcement departments across the state.
 - The League is requesting additional funding.

- Requires each city with a population below 50,000 served by a city health district to complete a study evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of merging with the general health district.
 - Requires the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and the state auditor's office to develop guidelines determining if a merger is advisable.
 - Requires city's mayor or manager to enter into a contract with a general health district for health services unless the general health district delays the merger.
 - Allocates \$6 million for the studies.
 - The League is looking into this provision.

- Continues funding for the Local Government Fund (LGF) at current statutory levels.
 - Based on current revenue estimates, the LGF and the Public Library Fund will each provide \$425 million in FY22 and \$440 million in FY23 in shared revenue.

- Mandates that the Ohio State Treasurer, along with the Ohio Office of Budget and Management (OBM) and the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) establish and maintain an expenditure database for the state and local governments.
 - Participation in the expenditure database is permissive for municipalities.

- Allows municipalities to place combined polices services and emergency management services (EMS) levies on the ballot.

Infrastructure:

- Allocates \$200 million over the biennium for underground infrastructure and brownfields.
 - While this funding appears in Line Item 195676 in the Budget Bluebook as “Community Infrastructure”, the funding is not currently in the budget as passed by the House. The League is requesting that the funding be included as an appropriation in the bill.
- Incorporates HB 2 funding into the budget bill, which adds an additional \$170 million for FY22 and \$20 million for FY23 allocated for broadband expansion.

Allocations for Law Enforcement:

- \$10 million in grants for body cameras for local law enforcement agencies
- \$8 million to help reduce violent crimes
- \$1 million to support local agencies in recruiting and hiring
- \$6.5 million to expand the Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center (ONIC) to further support local law enforcement and their partners.
- Allocates \$15 million for a one-year police training pilot program to assist law enforcement agencies with training costs.
- Creates a 12-member Law Enforcement Training Funding Safety Commission to study possible long-term methods for providing state aid to law enforcement agencies for training police officers.

H2Ohio:

- Allocates \$10 million each fiscal year of the biennium for the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) to continue improving water and wastewater infrastructure and reducing lead exposure by replacing an additional 1,500 lead service lines and more than 600 failed home treatment systems across seven counties.
 - The League is requesting that the funding be restored to the original \$92 million allocated in the as-introduced version of the budget.
- Allocates \$78.6 million over the biennium for the Department of Agriculture to continue efforts regarding mitigating nutrient runoff.
 - The League is requesting that the funding be restored to the \$98.6 million over the biennium in the as-introduced version of the budget.
- \$50 million for the Department of Natural Resources to continue wetland restoration efforts.