



OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Scott Oelslager
Senate Finance Committee Chairman
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: HB 500 Proponent Testimony

Dear Chairman Oelslager:

On behalf of the members of the Ohio Township Association (OTA) and the Coalition of Large Ohio Urban Townships (CLOUT), I am writing to express our support for Am. Sub. HB 500, the omnibus township bill.

The majority of the items contained in HB 500 stemmed from requests by individual townships, county prosecutors, township legal counsel or were included in the OTA's and CLOUT's legislative priorities for the 132nd General Assembly. As passed by the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, the bill contains 16 items of importance to townships. Those items include:

Zoning Issues (R.C. §§519.04, 519.07, 519.12, 519.13, 519.15)

1. Eliminates the mandatory requirement that a limited home rule township submit proposed zoning resolutions or amendments to the county or regional planning commission for approval, disapproval or suggestions. (R.C. §§519.07, 519.12)
2. Permits a township to charge a fee for any person appealing to the board of zoning appeals. (R.C. §519.15)
3. Permits a board of township trustees to temporarily suspend a member of the zoning commission or board of zoning appeals. (R.C. §§519.04, 519.13)

New Community Authority (R.C. §349.03)

Eliminates the acreage requirement that is placed on a new community authority if to be located in a township.

Election of a Board Chairperson (R.C. §§505.01, 505.482, 513.07, 513.071, 3375.121, 3709.03)

Requires a board of township trustees to elect a chairperson at the first meeting of each calendar year to serve for a period of one year. (R.C. §505.01)

Inventory of Township (R.C. §505.04)

Eliminates requirement that a township's inventory list shall be filed with the county engineer; rather the list is to be filed with the township fiscal officer.

Obligations Incurred Threshold (R.C. §507.11)

Increases the threshold that a township employee or official could incur from \$2,500 up to \$10,000 as authorized by the township board of trustees.

Appropriation for a Monument (R.C. §517.30)

Increases the amount a township may appropriate for the purpose of erecting a monument to commemorate the members of the armed forces from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

Vacation of a Lot Not Within a Municipal Corporation (R.C. §§711.25, 711.26, 711.27)

Repeals these sections of the Code.

Insurance for Oil & Gas Wells Owned by Township (R.C. §1509.07)

Permits a township that has an oil or gas well to receive a certificate of coverage from a joint self-insurance pool for coverage required by the Ohio Revised Code.

Filing of Question or Issue for Ballot (R.C. §3501.021)

Permits a political subdivision, including a township, to file either electronically or in paper form the certification to a board of elections for placement of a question or issue on the ballot beginning Jan. 1, 2021.

Approval of a Township Road Name Change (R.C. §5541.04)

Requires the county commissioners to act within 60 days on a request for a change in name of a county or township road. If the county does not act within 60 days on a township road name change, the name shall be changed.

Vacation of a Township Road (R.C. §5553.04)

Prohibits the board of county commissioners from vacating a township road without the township's permission.

Levy for Permanent Improvements and General Infrastructure in Townships (R.C. §§5705.19, 5705.121)

Creates a new levy opportunity for townships, municipalities and counties for any combination of the following purposes: acquisition, construction, improvement, or maintenance of buildings, equipment, and supplies for police, firefighting or emergency medical services; the construction, reconstruction resurfacing or repair of streets, roads, and bridges; or for general infrastructure projects.

Tax Increment Financing (R.C. §§5709.73, 5709.75)

1. Excludes safety service levies from a township incentive district TIF.
2. Permits townships that have TIFs that were enacted prior to July 21, 1994 to use revenue from TIFs for the continued maintenance of said projects.

The bill passed unanimously out of the House State & Local Government Committee, unanimously out of the House and unanimously out of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee.

Mr. Chairman, the OTA strongly supports HB 500 and encourages the favorable passage of the bill by the Senate Finance Committee. Should you or the members of the Committee have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Heidi M. Fought
Director of Governmental Affairs