



## OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
6/2/2022

### Ohio Township Bills Head to Governor DeWine's Desk

Blacklick, Ohio - The Ohio Township Association (OTA) saw two pieces of legislation move to the Governor's desk yesterday, June 1<sup>st</sup>. House Bill 377 and House Bill 206 both advance the authority and funding of townships in Ohio.

House Bill 377, sponsored by Rep. Hall (R-Madison Twp.) and Rep. Swearingen (R-Huron), distributes the second round of American Rescue Plan Act funding to Ohio's non-entitlement units of local government (NEUs). The monies distributed to townships can go to various general government services, including road maintenance, safety services, public facility updates, and other general government services. The Ohio Office of Budget and Management has already announced its plans to distribute these funds this summer.

Added to HB 377 was a provision that adjusts the definition of a "part-time employee" for healthcare purposes to allow townships additional flexibility to managing staff healthcare. This amendment raises the minimum hours for "part-time" workers to align with federal requirements and was added from two separate bills (HB 546/SB 299) also supported by the OTA.

House Bill 206, sponsored by Rep. Ghanbari (R-Perrysburg) and Rep. O'Brien (D-Warren), will also head to the Governor's desk. This bill is the result of years of hard work and will allow townships to pass a resolution authorizing a township officer to make arrests on an interstate in their township. Provisions of this bill include:

- The highway is part of the interstate highway system;
- The township has a population between 5,000 and 50,000 residents;
- Township Board of trustees grant authority to patrol the applicable interstate;
- The highway is located within the township officer's jurisdiction; and
- There is a permanent access point on and off the highway located within the jurisdiction and open to the public.

"We are thrilled to see positive legislation for townships being supported by the Ohio Legislature," stated OTA Executive Director Heidi M. Fought. "House Bill 206 has been the result of years of hard work and dedication by our members. We are thankful to Representatives Ghanbari and O'Brien for helping us get this bill across the finish line."

On House Bill 377, Fought said, "We must thank everyone who supported our legislation, but importantly Representatives Hall and Swearingen, for their support of House Bill 377. This funding has been instrumental in continuing township operations across the state."

House Bill 501, the township omnibus bill, also passed the House floor on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Sponsored by Rep. Hall, the bill addresses township donations of unneeded property, fraud reporting, and township redevelopment TIFs. Assembled by ideas from OTA members, this bill moves to the Senate, where it will be taken up in the fall.

If you have any questions, please contact the Ohio Township Association at 614-863-0045.

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*The Ohio Township Association is a statewide organization dedicated to the promotion and preservation of township government in Ohio. The OTA was founded on June 28, 1928 and is organized in 87 Ohio counties. OTA has more than 5,200 active members, made up of trustees and fiscal officers from Ohio's 1,308 townships, and more than 4,000 associate members.*