

LEGISLATIVE ACTION THIS WEEK:

SB 148 ELECTION REFORM To revise election laws.

This bill passed the Senate this week. The bill would, among other things:

(1) Prohibit a local elected official, during the 90 days before that elected official's name appears on the ballot at an election, from producing or disseminating any mass mailing or any form of advertising from the official's office that includes the name or photograph of the elected official;

(2) Permit a document or form of advertising produced or disseminated during the 90-day period to include the name of the office the official holds, but not the name or photograph of the official;

(3) Specify that no violation of this prohibition occurs, and no fine shall be imposed, if an elected official sends out normal office correspondence using office letterhead that is issued on a regular schedule throughout the year during the 90 days before the date of an election at which the official's name appears on the ballot;

(4) Permit a political subdivision, taxing authority, or other entity that placed an issue on the ballot to remove that issue from the ballot at any time prior to the 70th day before the election using the same process that the entity used to originally certify the issue for the ballot; and

(5) Require a subdivision placing a question, issue, nomination, or election on the ballot at a special election to prepay at least 70% of the estimated cost of preparing for and conducting that election to the county Elections Revenue Fund prior to the election, and specify that additional costs must be paid, and overpayments must be refunded, following the final cost calculation after the election.

The bill now goes to the House for hearings.

HB 50 ANNEXATION PETITIONS To require that a political subdivision owner be included in determining the number of owners needed to sign a petition for an expedited type-II annexation.

*This bill had a fourth hearing in the House Local Government Committee. A **substitute bill (attached)** was accepted and the bill would mandate a Cooperative Economic Development Agreement (CEDA) for any expedited annexation petition (709.023) that included land owned by a political subdivision. This is an interesting concept and one that would provide a voice to townships in annexation matters involving land owned by a political subdivision. Several municipalities testified in opposition to the substitute bill citing the new bill will kill all annexations in the state. **Please see opposition testimony attached.***

HB 153 BIENNIUM BUDGET To make appropriations for SFY2012-2013.

The bill had a hearing on Tuesday and amendments were to be submitted to the chair's office by Thursday afternoon. Over 100 amendments were submitted for consideration.

The OTA has been meeting with senators to request amendments to Sub. HB 153 and we worked with several senators to have amendments submitted on Thursday for consideration. Those amendments include clarifications to the township merger language, possible additional funding for LGF, increasing competitive bidding limits, clarifying law regarding trustee pay documentation, and several others. We have been informed that Senator Seitz has submitted an amendment to clarify the public records law, which was included in last week's legislative alert (also see below).

The Senate Finance Committee Chair will be reviewing all amendments submitted this weekend. A substitute bill is expected on Tuesday, May 31. We will know on Tuesday afternoon if any of our amendments were accepted. I will send an alert out on Tuesday evening with details of the sub bill. Testimony will be permitted next Wed.-Fri. on the substitute bill. Amendments to the substitute bill will be due next Friday.

HB 225 COUNTY AUDITOR REVIEWS To vest in county auditors responsibility for reviewing and approving property tax exemption applications for some publicly owned property, to authorize county auditors and boards of township trustees to adopt a direct deposit payroll policy, and to authorize counties to increase the amount credited to "rainy day" reserve balance accounts to one-sixth of the expenditures made in the preceding fiscal year from the fund in which the reserve balance account is established.

The bill had sponsor testimony. It was noted that two amendments will be added to the bill for townships: (1) clarify deferred comp language; and (2) permit townships to have the same authority as counties to increase reserve balance account limits.

HB 229 AGRICULTURE LAWS To revise the laws governing agriculture.

This bill had all testimony this week in the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee. There is a provision in this bill that would require local governments notify the state that they discussed potential infrastructure upgrades with CAFO owners within 75 days after being notified.

OTHER ISSUES:

Public Records: Last week we reported that Senators Seitz and Wilson are looking at legislation to address the abuse of public records requests that is happening in Ohio. [Please find a draft of this bill attached.](#) Thank you to those that contacted their senators asking for their support to be a co-sponsor. As mentioned above, this language has been submitted for inclusion in the budget, pending before the Senate Finance Committee.

MEETINGS THIS WEEK:

Sen. Skindell - Budget
Sen. Lehner - Budget
Sen. Oelslager - Budget
Rep. Kozlowski - Township issues
Sen. Patton - Budget
Sen. Jones - Budget
Sen. Bacon - Budget

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE BEGINNING 5/31/2011:

HB 153 BIENNIUM BUDGET

Tuesday, May 31, 2011 at 2:30pm (or at the call of the Chair)

*possible substitute bill

HB 153 BIENNIUM BUDGET

Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 9:00am and 2:30pm (or at the call of the Chair)

*public testimony

HB 153 BIENNIUM BUDGET

Thursday, June 2, 2011 at 1:00pm (or at the call of the Chair)

*public testimony

HB 153 BIENNIUM BUDGET

Friday, June 3, 2011 at 9:00am and 2:30pm (or at the call of the Chair)

*public testimony

ELECTIONS WEBINAR:

The Office of the Secretary of State is pleased to announce that it is offering a webinar on **Tuesday, June 7, 2011** from **10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** at no cost to participants.

The Webinar will provide "**An Introduction to the Ohio Questions and Issues Handbook.**" The handbook was written to assist boards of elections, county prosecutors, taxing authorities, and political subdivisions in placing local questions and issues on the ballot. This webinar will serve as a brief introduction to the materials and tools provided in the Secretary of State's question and issue handbook. I hope you will consider participating.

A "Webinar" is an online visual presentation designed to facilitate communication between a small number of presenters and a remote audience using the Internet and the local phone service. In order to participate, individuals that register will need a computer and an Internet connection to view a live PowerPoint presentation online; and a phone to hear the presentation and ask questions.

If you would like to register and participate, please go to:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/498862536>

The online registration system is set up to accept the **first 500 participants** (on a first come, first serve basis) and send a confirmation notice once a participant is registered.

If you have any questions regarding this Webinar, please contact Laura Pietenpol, Curriculum Development and Training Specialist at the Office of the Secretary of State via phone at (614) 466-6826 or via email at lpietenp@sos.state.oh.us.