



Ohio Legislative Report

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September 2025

Statehouse Happenings

HELPFUL LINKS

OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

www.legislature.ohio.gov

OH HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

www.ohiohouse.gov

OH SENATE:

www.ohiosenate.gov

OHIO GOVERNOR:

www.governor.ohio.gov

OHIO SECRETARY OF STATE:

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'Ohio Legislative Report'

Ohio Legislative Report

Is published electronically at the beginning of each month to report on the latest information about legislative issues taking place in Columbus that could affect the lives of Veterans, Military Personnel, their families, and Veteran Organizations in Ohio.

It is emailed at no charge to all who would like to receive it.

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Editor: David K. Root

Another month of no Committee hearings to report on. Hopefully hearings will start back up sometime in September. We can't say when because at this time The Ohio Legislature Website does not show any hearings scheduled on their Legislative Calendar. It does show weekly sessions beginning September 23.

The Budget

The biennium operating budget is still center stage in the General Assembly. We reported in the August issue that the House planed to override three items that Governor DeWine had vetoed. They called a special session on the morning of July 21 but only voted on one item which they did override. Talk by some representatives was to tackle the other items when they returned in September or possibly early October. All vetoed items dealt with property tax reform.

Property Tax Reform

The governor's special task force, Property Tax Reform Working Group, held their first meeting on July 24 in the Riffe Center. Much of the meeting was spent in discussion about the group's structure, objectives, responsibilities, and next steps.

Since then, the group met several times with the goal of producing proposals that would give homeowners, farmers and businesses in Ohio some much-needed property tax relief. During the meeting they discussed many ideas as well as considered the many pieces of legislation currently in the General Assembly.

Some of the ideas the group is looking at are putting restrictions on the ability to put emergency levies on the ballot or request an increase to a current levy, capping carryover revenue of schools, and limiting property tax increases. Their big challenge is to find a way to reduce the tax burden without cutting services or having to spend state money.

They have until the end of September to present a report of their findings.

Things to watching

There are many things our lawmakers are dealing with that will be of interest to all Ohio citizens, as well as things that will affect the lives of many if not all veterans.

Article 19 of the Ohio Constitution lays out the rules and requirements for a fair Congressional District Map. The current district map was created in 2022 and was declared unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court and is only in effect through 2026. The GA must pass a new congressional map by a 3/5 vote in each chamber, including at least

See Happenings on Page Three...

It was mentioned in the August issue that there were two bills dealing with the regulations on marijuana and hemp products. One was Senate Bill 56 and the other House Bill 198.

In this issue we give you the summary of HB 198 as it was introduced.

House Bill 198—*To amend sections 928.01, 928.06, and 3719.01 and to enact sections 930.01, 930.02, 930.03, 930.04, 930.05, 930.06, 930.07, 930.08, 930.09, 930.10, 930.11, 930.12, 930.13, 930.14, 930.15, 930.16, 930.17, and 930.99 of the Revised Code to regulate the manufacture, distribution, and sale of inhalable and ingestible hemp products.*

The Summary

Overview and intent

- Retains the existing Hemp Cultivation and Processing Program, but establishes a statutory framework for the regulation of the manufacture, distribution, and sale of hemp-derived cannabinoid products (HDCPs) under the Department of Agriculture.
- States that it is the intent of the General Assembly to establish uniform and statewide regulations governing the manufacture, distribution, and retail sale of HDCPs in Ohio.
- Defines “hemp-derived cannabinoid product” as a hemp product that is a finished good intended for human ingestion or inhalation that contains a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) concentration of up to 0.3% on a dry weight basis, but may contain concentrations of other hemp-derived cannabinoids in excess of 0.3%.
- Excludes from the definition of HDCP hemp products that are not intended for ingestion or inhalation, or seeds or seed-derived ingredients that are generally recognized as safe by the U.S. FDA.

Licensure

- Prohibits a person from manufacturing, distributing, or selling at retail an HDCP unless the person is licensed as a manufacturer, distributor, or retailer by the Director of Agriculture, and establishes requirements for all three licenses, including: ☐ Initial and renewal license fees; and ☐ A validity period of one year for each license.
- Requires the Director to adopt rules governing the license applications, procedures for approval, and

grounds and procedures for the denial, suspension, or revocation of a license.

Responsibilities of manufacturers

HDCP registration

- Requires a manufacturer to register with the Director each HDCP that it intends to sell or offer for sale in Ohio and to register and renew the registration in accordance with deadlines established in rules.
- Requires an application for registration to contain specified information, including the name and address of the applicant, the type and use of the product, and the certificate of analysis from an independent testing HDCP testing laboratory as required under the bill.
- Requires a manufacturer to apply for a new registration for an HDCP that has been previously registered for specified reasons, including the product’s information has changed since its initial registration.

Testing

- Requires a manufacturer to test each HDCP in accordance with rules prior to selling or offering for sale the product to a distributor.
- Requires a manufacturer to test for the presence and amounts of specified substances or organisms, including heavy metals and pesticides.
- Prohibits a manufacturer, distributor, or retailer from selling or offering to sell an HDCP that is not tested or that exceeds the maximum allowable level for a substance or organism specified in rules.
- Requires a manufacturer to contract with a testing laboratory to provide the required testing, and requires a testing laboratory to include specified information on a certificate of analysis, including:
 - ◇ The batch identification number;
 - ◇ The method of analysis for each test conducted; and
 - ◇ Proof that the certificate of analysis is congruent with the HDCP being tested.

Labeling

- Requires a manufacturer to include a label on each HDCP container that it sells or offers for sale in Ohio, and requires the label to include specified information, including:
 - ◇ The product name or common name on the front of the label;
 - ◇ A list of ingredients, including the amount of any cannabinoid, in milligrams;
 - ◇ An expiration date;
 - ◇ A statement that the product is only for persons 21 or older.
- Prohibits a label from including any images or other

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information that could appeal to children.

Restrictions on sales.

- Requires a manufacturer to ensure that each HDCP it sells or offers for sale in Ohio meets specified requirements, including the product is manufactured in the U.S. in accordance with all applicable laws.

Franchise agreements

- Establishes requirements governing franchise agreements between manufacturers and distributors, including when either entity can bring action in a court of competent jurisdiction for violation of the bill's provisions relating to those agreements.

Enforcement

Prohibitions

- Similar to liquor control laws, generally establishes prohibitions against manufacturers, distributors, and retailers from having any financial interest or financial investment in each other, but excludes small beverage manufacturers that sell beverages that are HDCPs at retail or to a distributor or retailer.
- Prohibits a person from doing specified activities, including: ☐ Selling or distributing an HDCP to a person who is under 21; ☐ If the person is under 21, purchasing, possessing, or accepting receipt of an HDCP; and ☐ Delivering, shipping, or causing to be delivered or shipped any HDCPs directly to any consumer in Ohio.
- States that whoever knowingly violates any of the

bill's provisions is guilty of a first degree misdemeanor.

Director's authority

- Authorizes the Director of Agriculture or the Director's designee to inspect the location of a manufacturer, distributor, or retailer or any other location to ensure compliance with the bill and rules.
- Requires the Director or the Director's designee to periodically sample, analyze, and test HDCPs distributed and sold in Ohio to ensure that those products comply with the bill and rules.

Exemptions – Safe Harbor

- Exempts from the bill's provisions products and manufacturers, distributors, and storage facilities of those products that do not comply with the bill's provisions, provided those products are not sold in Ohio.

Miscellaneous

- Generally allows a food service operation to sell or offer for sale an HDCP for on-site consumption only if it is a ready-to-consume or a direct consumption prepackaged HDCP.
- Prohibits a person, including a person issued a liquor permit under current law, from adding an HDCP to a beverage that includes beer or intoxicating liquor.
- Creates the same rights for an employer regarding HDCPs as for an employer's rights under the laws governing medical marijuana and adult-use cannabis.

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Happenings, from Page One

1/2 of Democrats by the end of September. Members of the public can submit redistricting plans through an online portal at <https://redistricting.legislature.ohio.gov/>.

There are currently more than half a dozen bills that pertain to gun regulations. Around three dozen bills having to do with Ohio schools or education have been introduced so far this year. Bills dealing with insurance, health care, highway safety, parenting and childcare, small business, and public utilities are all issues going through the many House and Senate Committees. These are bills that should be of interest or concern to every Ohio citizen, not just veterans.

By the People; for the People

For a full list of every bill and resolution in the current 136th General Assembly and also every past General Assembly going back to the 1980's visit: www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/status-reports. As always, the bills and resolutions pertaining to Ohio's military, veterans, or their families can be found in every

issue of OLR. *See page six.*

Find the legislation that is important to you and your family and contact your legislators and let them know how you feel about it, why it is important, and what you would like them to do. They are elected by the people to work for the people, but they need to know what the people want. It is up to each person to let them know. You can find the contact information for every

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Reflections

"Democracy is measured not by its leaders doing extraordinary things, but by its citizens doing things extraordinarily well."

- John Gardner

OUT IN THE DISTRICTS



Representative Derrick Hall (standing) attended a meeting of the NEO Progressive Veterans and talked about the deployment of Ohio National Guard to Washington, the looming Ohio gerrymandering battle, and other issues that impact veterans. Also speaking to the group was former State Representative Adam Miller.



On August 26 State Representative Joseph A. Miller, III (blue shirt) was taken on a tour of two Ohio National Guard Armories. One was in Norwalk and the other at the updated armory in Lorain.



State Representatives David Thomas (blue shirt) and Sarah Fowler Arthur (right) visited the new location of the Ashtabula County Veterans Service Office. They toured the building and presented Executive Director, Benjamin Schwartfigure (center) with a Proclamation from the Ohio House of Representatives.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS

If you have news or photos of a state representative or senator doing veteran/military stuff in their district, send it to us.

Email photos along with all info about the event and the photo to:
oh.leg.report@gmail.com



There were plenty of dignitaries in the village of Lockbourne, Ohio on August 20 for the groundbreaking ceremonies of the Lockbourne/Rickenbacker AFB Memorial Wall. The Wall will honor American military heroes such as the Tuskegee Airmen, Women Air Service Pilots (WASPs), and Lima Company, as well as the decades long history of the Lockbourne/Rickenbacker Air Force Base.

Pictured (l to r): Colonel Andrew Powers, Congressman Mike Carey, State Senator Michele Reynolds, Lockbourne Mayor Christie Ward, Columbus Council Member Nicholas Bankston, and State Representative Meredith R. Lawson-Rowe.

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More... *District Activities*



In the early morning hours of September 3, 1925, the U.S.S. Shenandoah, a lighter-than-air rigid airship, crashed in Noble County, Ohio. On the afternoon of Sunday, August 31, 2025 the citizens of Noble County remembered the day with a ceremony at the USS Shenandoah Memorial in Ava. On hand for the event were State Representative & Lt. Commander Haraz N. Ghanbari (r), who was representing the US Navy, State Senator Brian M. Chevez (c), and State Representative Ty Moore (l). They are pictured holding a miniature version of the signs now posted on I-77. A one mile stretch of the highway is designated "USS Shenandoah Memorial Highway" thanks to a bill sponsored by Senator Chevez during the previous General Assembly .



Members of the House Veterans and Military Development Committee visited Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base on August 26. They were given a tour of the base, and briefed about the mission and demands of our state & national defense here in Ohio.

Pictured (in civies, l to r): Representatives Haraz N. Ghanbari, Tracy M. Richardson, and Michael D. Dovilla.

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Where Gerrymandering Originated

According to The Andrew Goodman Foundation the term is associated with one of our country's founding fathers.

In 1812, the Boston Gazette coined the term gerrymandering, accompanied by a political cartoon of the updated (and extremely partisan) State Senate districts map that newly elected Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry and his Democratic-Republican party created to favor Gerry in future elections. The resulting map resembled a salamander, and thus the portmanteau gerrymandering entered the American political lexicon.

Since then, both parties have practiced gerrymandering in the U.S. in some fashion as a way to gain an advantage in future elections — and the resulting maps have looked just as strange as Gerry's Senate district map in 1812.

Meet With Your **Legislators**

Please save the date! I will be hosting town hall meetings to discuss the budget & what I am doing for you at the Statehouse. I encourage you to come and bring your own view on our community's needs.

- Monday, September 15, 6:00 at the New Albany Library
- Wednesday, September 17, 7:00 at the Westerville Library
- Saturday, November 1, 1:00 at the Gahanna Library

You may RSVP or submit a question you would like answered here: <https://forms.gle/RDrbf8geisZSNiN49>

Sincerely,

Beryl Brown R.

Beryl Brown Piccolantonio
House Minority Whip
House District 4



Constituent Coffee

with
State Representative Nick Santucci &
State Representative David Thomas

All events run from 9:00 - 10:00 AM

- September 25 at KT's Coffee (Hubbard)
- October 30 at Wall Street Coffee (Jefferson)
- November 20 at Scribblers (Geneva)
- December 11 at Lakeshore (Andover)

Residents of the 64th and 65th districts are invited to join Representative Santucci and Representative Thomas for coffee to discuss their questions and concerns.

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN JUNE

HB 414 introduced on August 13 by Representative **D. J. Swearingen** (HB-89).

The bill would enact section 5534.645 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 163 in Ottawa County as the "Navy Seaman Jadwisiak Memorial Highway."

It has not been referred to a committee yet.

HB 419 introduced on August 25 by Representatives **Jodi Salvo** (HD-51) and **Matthew Kishman** (HD-50).

The bill would amend section 4501.21 and to enact section 4503.727 of the Revised Code to create the "Save22" license plate.

It has not been referred to a committee yet.

A bill is a document by which a member of the General Assembly proposes to enact a new law or amend or repeal an existing law. The term "bill" is used to refer to the document from the time it is drafted and delivered to the members until it is considered and approved by both the House and the Senate. After passing both houses, a bill becomes an "act" and must be presented to the Governor for acceptance or rejection. If accepted, or if the Governor does not take any action for ten days, it becomes a "law."

An idea for a new law or a change in an existing law might originate with a member of the General Assembly, an administrative agency of the state, the Governor, a special interest group, or a private citizen.

Legislation In The 136th Ohio General Assembly Pertaining to Ohio Veterans, Active Duty, Reserve & National Guard and Their Families

- HB 1 Enact Ohio Property Protection Act
- HB 22 Authorize homestead exemption for surviving military spouses
- HB 27 Designate Specialist Jacob A. Ashton Memorial Bridge
- HB 40 Increase disabled veteran enhanced homestead exemption
- HB 50 To designate a portion of SR 47 the "PFC John Wayne Richard Memorial Highway."
- HB 56 To designate a portion of SR 421 the "CPL David James Amheiser Memorial Highway."
- HB 61 Modify homestead exemption, owner-occupancy tax credit amount
- HB 95 Support members of Ohio Veterans Education Council
- HB 96 Make state operating appropriations for FY 2026-27
- HB 135 Prohibit source of income discrimination in rental housing
- HB 171 Designate a portion of State Route 28 the "CPT Louis John Speidel Memorial Highway."
- HB 198 Regulate manufacture, sale of inhalable, ingestible hemp products
- HB 204 Designate 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day
- HB 228 To designate a portion of I 280 the "SSG Jack W. Coy Veterans Memorial Highway."

HB 234 Designate Cpl. Robert Dockstader Memorial Highway
HB 259 Designate Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway
HB 267 Regards creation, display of veterans benefit and services poster
HB 297 Regards funds provided by county for Memorial Day expenses
HB 316 LaRe Designate MSGT Norman Michael Kilbarger Memorial Highway
HB 339 Allow surviving spouse to retain Purple Heart license plate
HB 344 Regards electronic instant bingo, lottery terminals; levy a tax
HB 360 Designate SPC Louis P. Shuster Memorial Interchange
HB 383 Designate Litten Brothers Memorial Highway
HB 384 Designate Staff Sergeant Melvin Trushel, Sr. Memorial Highway
HB 385 Designate PFC Thomas "Tommy" Pizzino Memorial Highway
HB 414 Designate Navy Seaman Jadwisiak Memorial Highway
HB 419 Create the Save22 license plate

HCR 7 To support the work of the Am. Leg. Buckeye Boys State and the Am. Leg. Aux. Buckeye Girls State

HR 133 Honoring Battery B, 1st Battalion, 134th Field Artillery Regiment on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary.

SB 17 Designate 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day
SB 21 Designate Rutherford B. Hayes Day
SB 39 Provide for informational poster on veteran benefits and services
SB 56 Revise medical and adult-use marijuana laws; levy marijuana taxes
SB 88 Enact the Ohio Property Protection Act
SB 92 Authorize total property tax exemption-totally disabled veterans
SB 148 Designate a portion of State Route 2 the "Specialist Lloyd Andrew Sellers Memorial Highway."
SB 179 Verify veteran status of imprisoned individuals
SB 193 Designate Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway
SB 197 Legalize, tax internet gambling; make other Gambling Law changes
SB 218 Exempt armed forces-certified child care provider from licensure
SB 223 Require ODNR discount program for veterans, service members

SCR 7 Urge Congress reissue DoD Civilian Retiree Identification Cards

SR 21 Urge Congress support military, veteran mental health treatment
SR 22 Urge federal govt reduce processing time-veteran disability claim
SR 52 Honoring the DAR Elizabeth Sherman Reese Chapter on its 150th Anniversary
SR 97 Observing April 2025 as the Month of the Military Child in Ohio
SR 123 Honoring Deborah A. Ashenhurst on her retirement from the OVDS

Details of every bill can be found on the Ohio Legislature website. You can also check the status of bills as they travel thorough committees and sessions, check to see how the voting went, and read the testimony of every witness.

To find a bill type the bill number (example: SB 712 or HB 943) into the search bar and go from there.

You will find the Ohio Legislature's website here:
www.legislature.ohio.gov