



Ohio Legislative Report



Volume One Alpha; Number Six

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HELPFUL LINKS

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www.congress.gov

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www.house.gov

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Ohio Legislative Report

Is published electronically every to report on the latest information about legislative issues taking place in Columbus and Washington that will affect the lives of Veterans and Military Personnel and their families in Ohio.

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

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Editor: David K. Root

Statehouse Happenings

The month of June kept most of our legislators very busy. With summer break just around the corner the top priority was to get their desks cleared off as best they could.

There was quite a bit of party sparring going on in the offices, in the committees, and on the floors. Because June was Pride Month LGBTQ+ was a main topic. Abortion, education, gun violence, and the Ohio constitution were also hot topics.

But the number one issue that was on everyone's plate was the State Operating Budget (House Bill 33) for fiscal years 2024-25. Representative Jay Edwards introduced HB 33 on the 15th of February. It was a 4,311-page bill then. After many hearings in many committees and many amendments the bipartisan bill was reported back to the House and passed on the 26th of April with a vote of 78 to 19. It was 5559 pages then and it was sent to the Senate for their consideration.

In the Senate it received the same process. Numerous hearings in numerous committees and numerous amendments. The difference was all in the voting. Voting in the Senate was strictly along party lines every step of the way. On June 15th the full Senate voted 24 to 7 to pass the amended budget – called Substitute House Bill 33 at that time. It then went back to the House but with a vote of 23 yeas to 71 nays the House failed to concur.

So SHB 33 was then sent to a conference committee made up of three Representative and three Senators to come up with a compromise budget that would be acceptable to a majority. On June 30th the Senate voted 25 to 6 to pass the 2024-2025 Operating Budget and the House passed it with a vote of 67 to 30. The legislators also passed a temporary extension of the current budget to give Governor Mike DeWine time to read and sign it. He has the power to veto items if he wants but is expected to sign the 9,198-page budget following the July 4th holiday.

What is in the Biennial Budget that is of interest to Ohio's veteran and military population? There are several areas that can be looked at.

The operating budget for the Adjutant General came to a total of \$121.03 million for the two fiscal years 2024 & 2025. That is an increase from the previous two-year total of \$111 million. The funding comes from three sources. The General Revenue Fund (GRF), Dedicated Purpose Fund (DPF), and Federal funds (FED).

There are a couple of items in the Department of Higher Education that receive GRF dollars. The War Orphans and Severely Disabled Veterans' Children Scholarships will get \$38.4 million, and the Air Force Institute of Technology will get \$4 million in FY 2024-2025. Also receiving GRF money will be the National Guard Scholarship Program. That program will get \$37.65 million during the two years.

The Department of Job and Family services will receive funds to help

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BILLS INTRODUCED DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE

HB 202:

Introduced by Representative Jim Thomas (District 20) on June 6th.
Referred to the House Transportation Committee.

The bill would enact section 5534.644 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of United States Route 62 in Canton as the "Specialist Dennis Alan Combs Memorial Highway."

HB 231:

Introduced by Representatives Gail K. Pavliga (District 72) and Adam C. Miller (District 6) on June 29th.
Referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.

The bill will amend section 340.03 and to enact sections 5119.80, 5119.801, 5119.803, 5119.805, 5119.807, 5119.809, 5119.8011, 5119.8013, 5119.8014, 5119.8015, and 5119.8017 of the Revised Code to establish a 9-8-8 suicide prevention and mental health crisis telephone line.

HR 189:

Introduced by Representative Gail Manning (District 52) on June 20th.
Referred to the House Rules and Reference Committee.

The resolution honors Thomas Mihalys Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1079 on its Centennial.

HCR 8:

Introduced by Representatives Thomas F. Patton (District 17) and Brian E. Lampton (District 70) on June 20th.
Referred to House Aviation and Aerospace Committee on June 27th and adopted the same day.

The resolution will urge the federal government to select Ohio for the permanent headquarters of the United States Space Command.

SR 171:

Introduced by Senator Nathan H. Manning (District 13) on June 30th.

The resolution honors Thomas Mihalys Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1079 as it commemorates its One Hundredth Anniversary.

Details on 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 testimonies of witnesses.

To find a bill put the bill number (i.e. SB 712 or HB 943) into the search bar and go from there.

You can find the Ohio Legislature's website here:

www.legislature.ohio.gov

Disabled American Veterans

Some of their 2023 TOP PRIORITIES

.Burn Pits, Agent Orange and other Toxic Exposures

The men and women who serve are often placed in situations that have long-term health effects that will impact their individual functioning, often results in industrial impairments, which require physical rehabilitation and future health care. When service members are subjected to toxins and environmental hazards, our sense of duty to them must be heightened as many of the illnesses and diseases due to these toxic exposures may not be identifiable for years, even decades, after they have completed their service. Although there has been some notable progress achieved over the past two decades for veterans who suffered illness due to toxic and environmental exposures, there are still too many who have yet to receive the full recognition, health care and benefits our nation owes to them.

Survivor Benefits, Veteran Burials and Cemeteries

DAV seeks to increase DIC rates to 55% of disability compensation and index them for inflation. Currently, DIC provides a surviving spouse only 43% of the disability compensation provided to a 100% disabled veteran, even though many survivors, particularly those who also served as the veteran's caregiver, reported they had no source of income other than the veteran's disability compensation.

DAV supports change DIC to a graduated benefit to make survivors eligible at five years for 50% of the full benefit amount, increasing proportionally to 100% at 10 years. The DIC program would be more equitable if survivors were eligible for a partial DIC benefit starting after five years of the veteran's being totally disabled, and proportionally increasing to full DIC entitlement at 10 years.

DAV is advocating to reduce the remarriage age for a surviving spouse to remain eligible for DIC to 55. The Civil Service Retirement System and Department of Defense's Survivor Benefit Plan program both allow spouses to remain eligible for survivor benefits if they remarry at age 55 or older; the DIC program should do the same.

Education and Employment

The journey from injury to recovery is not complete until a veteran is able to find meaning in his or her life. For those who are able, that means getting back to work to care for their families. As the nation winds down from more than a decade of war, thousands are making the transition from military to civilian life.

DAV is committed to ensuring that the men and women who stood up for America have the tools, resources and opportunities they need to competitively enter the job market and secure meaningful employment. DAV recognizes the value, talent, education and work ethics that veterans add to the workforce.

Veterans' unemployment, especially rates among service-disabled veterans, remains a matter of concern. The need for VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) services is escalating with the increase of separating service members returning from deployment in Southwest Asia. In addition, stagnant funding for VR&E has adversely impacted the congressionally recommended 1:125 counselor-to-client ratio, which is crucial to providing one-on-one counseling.

Bills To Watch In The US Congress

HR 645: Introduced on January 31st by Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-FL-20).

This bill (*known as the Healthy Foundations for Homeless Veterans Act*) permanently authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to use specified funding to provide assistance to homeless veterans and veterans participating in the Department of Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program. Additionally, the VA may collaborate with one or more organizations to manage the use of VA land for homeless veterans for living and sleeping.

HR 1378: Introduced on March 7th by Congressman Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ-6).

This bill (*Veterans' Appeals Backlog Improvement Act*) would amend title 38, United States Code, to establish an internship program within the Board of Veterans' Appeals, and for other purposes.

HR 3790: Introduced on June 1st by Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin (D-MI-7).

This bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to extend increased dependency and indemnity compensation paid to surviving spouses of veterans who die from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, regardless of how long the veterans had such disease prior to death.

S 302: Introduced on February 7th by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

The bill (*Barbosa Act*) would amend title 10, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Defense to provide colorectal cancer screening for members of the uniformed services who served in locations associated with toxic exposure, and for other purposes.

OPINIONS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Portion of Law Should Be Amended Not Removed

Ohio Senate Bill 116 focuses on unemployment benefits.

Ohio is also one of the few states that have the Dependency add-on. Which, with this bill they would do away with. The current bill only makes it available to those who made over certain amounts per week based on the number of Dependents (1-2 Dep. \$1002 or more and for 3+ dep. \$1114). This portion of the bill doesn't need to be removed but changed so there is no limit. We have all heard stories of single parents going to job interviews and needing to leave their kids in the car because they can't afford a daycare/babysitter.

Unemployment is something that transition Active Duty service members are told to get while we try/ wait for a job, especially for single/dual military families, though they still wouldn't

qualify for the add-on because of the Wage limit amount set so high, hence why this needs amended and not removed completely.

Andrea Neutzling

20 Year Veteran Supports Veteran Legislation

I am a 20 yr Army Veteran who served in Iraq. I am also a life member of the VFW, Amvets, DAV and American Legion. I currently serve as the Director for Sandusky County Veterans Service Office.

I strongly support the following bills that are in the

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You can follow, learn, and research every bill as it travels through the Ohio General Assembly.

www.legislature.ohio.gov

OUR OPINION

Ohio Needs Command HQ

The recently introduced House Concurrent Resolution 8, if passed in both chambers (it has already passed in the House) will be sent to the President, Secretary of Defense, and others in Washington urging them to select Ohio for the location of the United States Space Command's permanent headquarters. It was introduced by Representatives Thomas F. Patton (District 17) and Brian E. Lampton (District 70).

With Ohio's rich history in aviation and aerospace in is logical that Wright Patterson Air Force Base be named as the U.S. Space Command headquarters. We are known as the 'birthplace of aviation and is the home of 26 astronauts. We have NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland and NASA Neil A. Armstrong Test Facility in Sandusky.

According to Patton, "Wright-Patt is one of the largest and most impressive Air Force bases in the country, with over 30,000 individuals employed on base, including military members, government workers, and civilian employees".

"It is no question that Wright Patterson sets the tone for aviation and aerospace innovation and workforce development in our state and country", Lampton said in a press release.

Dayton, Ohio would be a perfect fit for Space Command Headquarters.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Ohio Legislative Report welcomes letters to the editor.

- Letters are limited to 175 words.
- Letters with over 175 words may be edited.
- Letters will be subject to editing for accuracy, clarity, length, and taste.
- Letters must include writer's name, address, and phone number for the purpose of verification.

EMAIL LETTERS TO:

oh.leg.report@gmail.com

Reflections

*"In a gentle way, you can
shake the world"*

-Mahatma Gandhi

Legislation In The 135th Ohio General Assembly

Pertaining to Ohio Veterans, Active Duty, Reserve & National Guard, and their Families

- ◇ HB 18 Allow military license plate applicant present county veterans ID
- ◇ HB 33 Establishes operating appropriations for fiscal years 2024-2025
- ◇ HB53 Authorize refundable tax credits for hiring certain veterans
- ◇ HB 57 Index the homestead exemption to inflation
- ◇ HB 60 Increase amount of and expand the homestead exemption
- ◇ HB 69 Revise membership of county veterans service commissions
- ◇ HB 90 Authorize property tax exemption for disabled veterans, spouses
- ◇ HB 123 Designate Honor and Remember flag to honor fallen service members
- ◇ HB 126 Expand municipal income tax exemption for military pay
- ◇ HB 131 Designate Army SSgt. Charles V. Kettler Memorial Highway
- ◇ HB 132 Designate Army Sgt. Herbert C. Linville Memorial Highway
- ◇ HB 133 Designate Army Sgt. Ronnie Blair Memorial Highway
- ◇ HB 150 Prohibit rental discrimination based on lawful source of income
- ◇ HB 202 Designate Specialist Dennis Alan Combs Memorial Highway
- ◇ HB 231 Establish 9-8-8 suicide prevention, mental health telephone line
- ◇ HR 95 Urge Congress to extend GI Bill benefits
- ◇ HR 189 Honoring Thomas Mihalis Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1079 on its Centennial
- ◇ HCR 8 To urge the federal government to select Ohio for the permanent headquarters of the United States Space Command
- ◇ SB 12 Regards veteran-owned business enterprise certification program
- ◇ SB 14 Expand veteran eligibility to teach without license
- ◇ SB 15 Authorize Military License Plate Program permanent registration
- ◇ SB 43 Modify homestead exemption-surviving spouse of a disabled veteran
- ◇ SB 45 Designate Veterans Memorial Bridge in Trumbull County
- ◇ SB 63 Require plaintiff in asbestos claim to file specified disclosures
- ◇ SB 64 Expand Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program
- ◇ SB 110 Designate Sgt. Anthony Kress Vinnedge Memorial Highway
- ◇ SB 113 Regards failure to comply with Military Selective Service System
- ◇ SB 114 Designate Lance Corporal James F. Kimple Memorial Highway
- ◇ SR 171 Honoring Thomas Mihalis Memorial Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1079 as it commemorates its One Hundredth Anniversary

OHIO CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, BILL OF RIGHTS

SECTION #3 RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE

Effective: 1851

The people have the right to assemble together, in a peaceable manner, to consult for their common good; to instruct their representatives; and to petition the general assembly for the redress of grievances.

2023 OHIO SPECIAL/GENERAL ELECTIONS CALENDAR

July 10 Deadline for Voter Registration for August 8 Special Election

August 8 Special Election Day

Oct 10 Deadline for Voter Registration for November 7 General Election

November 7 General Election day

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Ohio General Assembly: HB 18, HB 33, HB 53, HB 57, HB 60, HB 90, HB 123, HB 126, HB 131, HB 132, HB 133, HB 150, and HB 202. HR 95 and HCR 8.

SB 12, SB 14, SB 15, SB 43, SB 45, SB 63, SB 64, SB 110, SB 113 and SB 114.

Our veterans served this country proudly and many of us continue to serve our communities in many ways. We all hope that we can get support for all these pieces of legislation.

Thank you,
Terry Stanforth
Fremont, OH

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veterans with a range of workforce and employment services needed to meet their employment and training needs. The funds for FY 2023 & 2024 will amount to \$119.5 million.

There is a portion of the GRF that provides subsidies to 13 veteran service organizations (VSOs) that serve Ohio's veterans. These organizations provide services to veterans and their families to help assist with accessing benefits, job placement and training, transportation to and from Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities, and emergency assistance. The subsidies for the 13 VSOs totaled \$5.58 million for FY 2024 & 2025. For the FY 2022-2023 they received \$4.95 million.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services (DVS) received a big boost mostly due to a \$65 million appropriation for critical upgrades at Ohio's Veterans Homes for the 2024 fiscal year. The Department is comprised of the four sections. Veterans Services, Ohio Veterans Homes, Veteran Educational Programs, and the Veterans Bonus Program. The funds come from the General Revenue Fund (GRF), Dedicated Purpose Fund (DPF), Debt Service Fund (DSF), and Federal (FED). The DVS appropriations will total \$194.97 million for the two years. That is an increase of \$89.9 million over the previous two-year period.

**OHIO LEGISLATIVE REPORT
IS ON FACEBOOK**

Joins us and follow all the actions of
the Ohio General Assembly.

How A Bill Becomes Law

From a simple idea -to a bill -to an act -to a law. These are the steps that are followed in Ohio.

Step 1. INTRODUCTION

Senators put their ideas into writing in the form of a bill. Most of these bills are a direct result of an idea or concern shared by a constituent. Once a bill is drafted, it is introduced and given a unique number. To become law in Ohio, a bill must receive three "considerations" in each chamber of the General Assembly. Introduction of a bill constitutes "first consideration."

Step 2. COMMITTEE PROCESS

Committees are the best forums for thoroughly studying a bill. They give legislators an opportunity to hear from experts and concerned citizens who testify before a committee to express their opinions or make recommendations. Through this process, members may change the bill with alterations called amendments or choose to take no action at all. If a committee recommends a bill be considered by the entire chamber, the bill is voted on and reported by the committee. The referral of a bill to a committee constitutes "second consideration."

Step 3. THE FLOOR

All members have an opportunity to debate and amend a bill when it goes before the entire Senate or House on the floor. When debate on a bill is concluded, the Senate President or the Speaker of the House directs the Clerk of that chamber to call the roll, and members cast their votes. If a bill receives a majority of the votes cast (17 of the 33 votes in the Senate; 50 of the 99 votes in the House), it passes and moves to the other chamber, where a similar process is followed. Consideration of a bill on the floor constitutes "third consideration."

Step 4. CONCURRENCE

If the House makes any changes to a Senate bill, they may vote on whether to concur with the changes. If the Senate does not concur with the House changes, a conference committee made up of members from both chambers meets to reconcile differences between the two versions of the bill. The same process happens if the senate makes changes to a house bill. Once the revised bill is approved by the Senate and the House, the bill becomes an "act" and is sent to the governor.

Step 5. THE GOVERNOR

The governor can sign the act into law or reject it by issuing a veto. A three-fifths vote of the members of the House and Senate is necessary to override the governor's veto. A signed act becomes law after 90 days. If the governor takes no action within 10 days of receiving the act, it becomes law without his or her signature.