



# Ohio Legislative Report

Volume Two-Alpha; Number Six

June 2025

## Statehouse Happenings

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'Ohio Legislative Report'

### Ohio Legislative Report

Is published electronically at the start 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.

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Editor: David K. Root

It was the Senate's turn to tackle the Budget Bill (HB 96). There were hearings all month in several committees. The general assembly has until June 30 to pass the bill and have the governor sign it into law.

There were seven pieces of veteran/military legislation introduced in May. In the house there were three new bills and one resolution. The senate had two bills and one resolution. (see page seven)

#### May 5—9

The House Workforce and Higher Education Committee held the second hearing for HB 95 on Tuesday afternoon. The bill, introduced by Representatives **Andrea White** (HD-36) and **Brian Stewart** (HD-12) in February would appropriate \$1.144 million for FY 2026 and FY 2027 to support higher education institutions that are members of the Ohio Veterans Education Council. Testimony was heard from five individuals and written testimony from three others – all in support of the bill.

The same afternoon the Senate Armed Service, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee heard sponsor testimony from Senator **Terry Johnson** (SD-14). He introduced SB 179 in April. The bill would establish a mandatory program by which certain correctional, judicial, and veterans' service entities must investigate and verify the veteran status of inmates or individuals charged with a criminal offense punishable by incarceration.

Wednesday morning the House Veterans and Military Development Committee met and held second hearings on SB 39 and HB 204. SB 39 was introduced in January by Senators Johnson and

**Hearcel F. Craig** (SD-15). It would require the Director of Commerce, in consultation with the Director of Veterans Services, to create a veterans' benefits and services poster and provide an employer with a copy of the poster at the employer's request. There was no testimony received by the committee.



Oravec



Sen. Johnson

House Bill 204 would designate March 9th as "6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion Day." It was introduced in March by Representatives **Erika White** (HD-41) and **Melanie Miller** (HD-67) as a companion bill to Senate Bill 17. Proponent testimony was heard from two witnesses and there was written

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testimony submitted by two others. One of the witnesses was David G. Oravec, Executive Director of the Lucas County Veterans Service Commission who talked about how important mail was for the deployed troops and told of own experiences while serving.

### May 12—16

There was only one veteran/military bill scheduled for a hearing in the Senate this week, but House committees were busy both Tuesday and Wednesday. The Workforce and Higher Education Committee met Tuesday afternoon for the third hearing on HB 95. There was no testimony, and a motion was made to favorably report the bill out of committee. It passed 12 to 0.

The General Government Committee met the same afternoon with SB 21 and AmSB 17 on the agenda. There was no testimony received for either bill. It was the second hearing for AmSB 17. The bill is the companion bill to HB 204 and was introduced by Senators **Michele Reynolds** (SD-4) and Craig in January and passed unanimously by the Senate in February.

Senate Bill 21 would designate October 4 as "Rutherford B. Hayes Day" in Ohio. It was introduced in the Senate by Senators **Andrew O. Brenner** (SD-19) and **Bill Reineke** (SD-26) in January and passed in February. Following a motion to favorably report the bill out of committee a vote of 12 to 0 was taken. SB 21 then went to the full House where it would be passed on May 21 with a 95 to 0 vote.

Wednesday morning the Veterans and Military Development Committee met and heard sponsor testimony from Senator **Kyle Koehler** (SD-10). His concurrent resolution (SCR 7) urges Congress to issue Civilian Retiree Identification Cards to qualifying Department of Defense retirees, and to ensure the cards are accepted for access to military recreational areas without the need for further documentation. He introduced SCR 7 in February, and the Senate adopted it in April.

The committee also had House Bill 204 on their agenda for its third hearing but there was not any testimony.

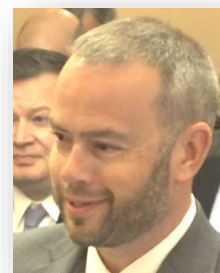
Later Wednesday morning the Ways and Means Committee held the fifth hearing for HB 22. This bill was introduced by Representatives **Brian Lorenz** (HD-60) and **David Thomas** (HD-64) in February. The bill would authorize a full homestead exemption for surviving spouses of members of the



*Sen. Koehler*

uniformed services killed in the line of duty. The committee did not have any testimony submitted, however an amendment was accepted that would do three things to the bill. 1. It requires the surviving spouse to have lived in Ohio for one year before qualifying for the exemption. 2. Removes the penalty that if the spouse remarried or cohabitated with another unrelated person, they would lose the exemption. And 3. Limits the homestead exemption to ten years.

Senator **Nathan H. Manning** (SD-13) introduced SB 197 on Tuesday and on Wednesday he gave his sponsor testimony before the Select Committee on Gaming. SB 197 would do a number of things including authorizing three new types of online gambling: internet gambling, internet lottery gaming (iLottery), and online pari-mutuel wagering on horse racing, but what would affect the veteran service organizations of Ohio is that it transfers the regulation of charitable gaming (such as bingo) and sweepstakes terminal devices from the Attorney General (AGO) to the Ohio Casino Control Commission (CAC) as of January 1, 2027. It also increases the hours of operation for VSOs and increases the threshold that determines the percentage of the annual net profit that must be donated and the percentage the organization may keep to cover its expenses. It would further require that the license fees CAC collects under the Charitable Gaming Law be deposited in a new Charitable Gaming Fund and that money be transferred from the fund as authorized to benefit both AGO's Charitable Law Fund and CAC's operating fund.



*Sen. Manning*

### May 19—23

The first bill in the week was House Bill 1 Tuesday morning. It is a companion bill to Senate Bill 88. Both bills would prohibit certain governments, businesses, and individuals from acquiring certain real property and are being called the Ohio Property Protection Act. It was the third hearing for the Bill that was introduced in January by Representatives **Angela N. King** (HD-84) and **Roy Klopfenstein** (HD-82). The hearing had 72 witnesses and lasted nearly two and a half hours. All the witnesses opposed the bill or at least had concerns with it.

House Bill 234 was on the agenda in the

**Continued on next Page...**

Transportation Committee in the afternoon. HB 234 would designate a portion of State Route 2 in Ottawa County as the "Cpl. Robert Dockstader Memorial Highway." It was introduced by Representative **D. J. Swearingen** (HD-89) in February. It was the first hearing for the bill, so the testimony was from sponsor Swearingen.

On Wednesday morning the Veterans and Military Development Committee held the fourth hearing for HB 204. There was no testimony, and it received a 10 to 0 vote for favorable passage.



*Rep. Swearingen*

Next was the third hearing for SB 39 –the bill to create an informational poster on veterans benefits. Testimony was heard from two members of the United Steelworkers Union who were both veterans. There was also written testimony from a third member of the union. All three provided proponent testimony for the bill.

Also Wednesday morning the members of the Ways and Means Committee held the sixth hearing for House Bill 22. Again, there was no testimony, and an amendment was accepted by the committee. This amendment simply clarified the previous amendment with different language.

The Senate Select Committee on Gaming met to hear testimony on SB 197 for its second hearing. Four witnesses testified in person and four submitted written testimony. All testimony discussed the pros and cons of the bill as it pertained to different forms of iGaming in Ohio and how this bill compares to the laws in neighboring states. Not one witness touched on the changes the bill would make to charitable gaming.

### **May 26—30**

This week it was the Senate holding hearings on veteran/military bills. There were three bills in three committees.

The first hearing was for Senate Bill 88 before the General Government Committee on Tuesday. Like its companion bill (HB 1) all of the witnesses opposed the bill or had concerns with it. There were more than 230 witnesses and the hearing lasted more than two hours.

Following the Senate session Wednesday afternoon the Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee met and held the second hearing for SB 179. Two written testimonies were submitted and one individual testified in person. All were proponents of the bill to verify veteran status of imprisoned individuals.

The third bill to have a hearing was SB 197 for its third hearing in the Select Committee on Gaming. The committee heard or read testimony during the two-hour long hearing from 36 witnesses all who opposed the bill or had concerns with parts or all of it. Merle Pratt, a former State Commander of the AMVETS Department of Ohio and a current board member of the Ohio Veterans and Fraternal Charitable Coalition (OVFCC) shared his concerns about transferring oversight from the Attorney General's Office to the Casino Control Commission due to the vast differences between charitable gaming and for-profit gaming. He reminded the committee of the contributions veteran and fraternal organizations have made within their communities and throughout the state. Pratt was thankful for the increases in hours and distribution threshold because OVFCC had been advocating for them for some time.



*Pratt*

June will be the final month for House Bill 96. The Senate must finish making their amendments to the House version, send it back to the House for their concurrence, and get it to the Governor for his approval before the end of the month.

In Ohio the Governor can veto portions of the bill and still pass the rest of it. This is called a line-item veto. Should Governor DeWine veto any portion of HB 96, the General Assembly can repass (override) those vetoed portions. First the House would have to repass them since the bill started there and then the Senate. However, overriding the veto would require a three-fifths majority vote from both.

— O L R —

## *Reflections*

*"Open-minded is the ability to look on both sides without taking side. Fanaticism must be put to death."*

*- Mwanandeke Kindembo*



## ***In a Nut Shell...***

A Summary from the OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DRAFTING

**Senate Bill 88** - *To amend sections 319.202, 5301.256, and 5323.02 of the Revised Code to modify the law that prohibits certain governments, businesses, and individuals from acquiring certain real property and to name this act the Ohio Property Protection Act.*

### **The Summary**

- ◆ Extends the prohibition in current law against certain foreign countries, businesses, individuals, and organizations acquiring agricultural land to other real property located within 25 miles of a critical infrastructure facility or a U.S. military base, camp, or airport (collectively referred to as “protected property”).
- ◆ Clarifies that the prohibition applies to both direct and indirect acquisitions of protected property.
- ◆ Broadens the “persons” that may be subject to the protected property prohibition to include criminal enterprises, gangs, and cartels.
- ◆ Requires a person subject to the protected property prohibition to divest of all rights, titles, and interests in protected property, including those acquired before the bill’s effective date, within two years.
- ◆ Requires the Secretary of State to update the registry of persons subject to the protected property prohibition at least one time every six months and to consider potential threats to critical infrastructure, security, and military defense, in addition to threats to agricultural production.
- ◆ Specifies that a country listed on the registry is a “foreign adversary,” and that the protected property prohibition applies automatically to the country’s government; citizens; headquartered businesses; businesses owned or controlled by such governments, citizens, and headquartered businesses; and agents, fiduciaries, or trustees of any of the foregoing.
- ◆ Exempts acquisitions by an agent, fiduciary, or trustee that is not, themselves, subject to the protected property prohibition so long as the acquisition is not an attempt to circumvent the law.
- ◆ Exempts individuals who are U.S. citizens or nationals from the protected property prohibition, so long as the individual is not acquiring the property as an agent, fiduciary, or trustee of a person subject to the prohibition.
- ◆ Requires the statement filed with the county auditor in connection with the conveyance of protected property to include affirmations by the buyer and

seller as to whether they are subject to the protected property prohibition and, in the case of the seller, whether the property was acquired under an exception to that prohibition.

- ◆ Prohibits the county auditor from indorsing a conveyance of protected property without the required affirmations but prohibits the auditor from refusing to indorse a conveyance merely because the buyer or seller are prohibited from acquiring protected property.
- ◆ Requires the county auditor to refer a conveyance of protected property that the buyer or seller affirms, or the auditor has reason to believe, violates the protected property prohibition to county sheriff for investigation.
- ◆ Shifts enforcement of the protected property prohibition from the Attorney General to county sheriffs and county prosecutors.
- ◆ Eliminates references in current law to land “escheating to the state.”
- ◆ Changes the distribution of the proceeds from a court ordered sale of protected property.
- ◆ Specifies that no person is required to determine or inquire about whether another person is subject to the protected property prohibition other than a person subject to that prohibition or a county auditor, county sheriff, county prosecutor, or trier of fact acting in that person’s official capacity as required by the bill.
- ◆ Specifies that no title to an interest in real property is invalid or subject to divestment by reason of a violation by a former owner of the protected property prohibition.
- ◆ Names the bill the “Ohio Property Protection Act.”

**House Bill 267** - *To enact section 4113.13 of the Revised Code regarding the creation and display of a poster containing information on benefits and services for veterans.*

### **The Summary**

- ◆ Requires the Director of Commerce, in consultation with the Director of Veterans Services, to create a veterans’ benefits and services poster.
- ◆ Requires the Director of Commerce to provide an employer with a copy of the poster at the employer’s request, and allows the employer to display it on the employer’s premises.

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Representative Angela N. King (*left*) was on hand on May 8 to congratulate Armcorp Construction of Celina on being named 2024 Veteran Business of the Year by U.S. Small Business Administration.



Representative Ty D. Mathews (*center*) and former Representative Jon Cross (*left*) attend the ceremony naming a portion of State Route 273 "Major David McGue Memorial Highway" on May 9. Cross sponsored the legislation in the previous General Assembly naming the highway.



Representative Johnathan Newman (*l*) presented a House Resolution on May 17 honoring Battery B, 1st Battalion, 134th Field Artillery Regiment on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary.



Representative James M. Hoops (*third from left*) and County and local dignitaries joined a Gold Star Mother on May 23 to dedicate the Gold and Blue Star Family Memorial Bridge in Montpelier.



Representative James M. Hoops (*second from right*) joined local dignitaries and the American Legion to dedicate the POW/MIA Memorial Viaduct in Montpelier on May 23.

## 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](mailto:oh.leg.report@gmail.com)

See *Districts* on Page Seven...



# Meet With Your **Legislators**



**Tristan Rader**  
4.9K friends • 33 mutual

Cancel request Message

## Coffee with Rep. Rader

Propaganda Coffee

Coffee with Rep. Rader: Connecting Over Coffee and Conversation

Join State Representative Tristan Rader for an informal and engaging community event! "Coffee with Rep. Rader" is your chance to sit down, ask questions, share your concerns, and have an open conversation about the issues that matter most to you and your community. These relaxed gatherings offer a unique opportunity to meet your representative face-to-face, hear about Tristan's work in the Ohio Statehouse, and discuss ways we can build a brighter future together.

### Next:

June 27th: Koffie Cafe – 2517 Market Ave., Cleveland, 44113 (Ohio City)

Whether you want to discuss local issues, state policies, or simply get to know Tristan better, we'd love to see you there! Stop by for as little or as long as you'd like. Coffee and great conversation are on us!



## State Representative Jodi Salvo District Office Hours

March - June

Thursdays at 6 PM - Saturdays at 9 AM

Dover Library - 525 N Walnut St,  
Dover, OH 44622



## Constituent Coffee

with

State Representative Nick Santucci &  
State Representative David Thomas

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

- June 26 at Cortland Main (Cortland)
- July 31 at Market House (Howland)
- August 28 at Twisted Peacock (Vienna)
- 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.



*You're Invited!*

## OFFICE HOURS

with State Representative Newman

**When:** Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6 PM

**Where:** Johnston Farm and Indian Agency - 9845 North Hardin Road, Piqua, OH 45356



## State Representative Karen Brownlee

## The Great 28 Town Hall Meeting

## QUINN CHAPEL AME CHURCH

10998 Southland Rd,  
Cincinnati, OH 45240

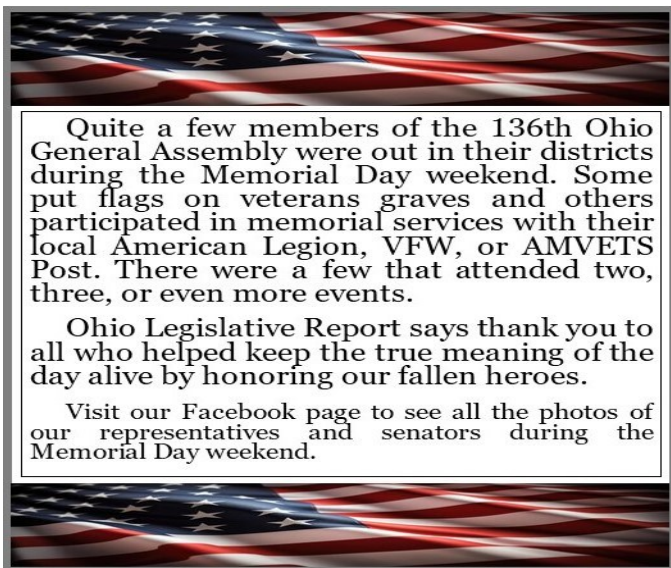
**Saturday,  
June 14th  
10-11 AM**



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Send your press releases to:  
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by the end of each month to be included.



## LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN MAY

**HB 259** introduced on May 13 by Representatives **Jack K. Daniels** (HD-32) and **Bill Roemer** (HD-31).

The bill would enact section 5534.609 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 241 in Summit County as the "Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway."

It was referred to the House Transportation Committee.

**HB 267** introduced on May 13 by Representatives **Lauren McNally** (HD-58) and **Brian Lampton** (HD-70).

The bill would enact section 4113.13 of the Revised Code regarding the creation and display of a poster containing information on benefits and services for veterans.

It was referred to the House Veterans and Military Development Committee.

**SB 193** introduced on May 13 by Senator **Kristina D. Roegner** (SD-27).

The bill would enact section 5534.609 of the Revised Code to designate a portion of State Route 241 in Summit County as the "Captain Joshua Michael McClimans Memorial Highway."

It was referred to the Senate Transportation Committee.

**SB 197** introduced on May 13 by Senator **Nathan H. Manning** (SD-13).

The bill would amend sections and enact new sections of the Revised Code to legalize internet gambling and levy a tax on businesses that provide internet gambling, to permit internet lottery gaming and online wagering on horse racing, to make other changes to the Gambling Law, and make an appropriation.

It was referred to the Senate Select Committee on Gaming.

**SR 123** introduced on May 13 by Senators **Terry Johnson** (SD-14) and **Steve Wilson** (SD-7).

The resolution would honor Deborah A. Ashenhurst on her retirement from the Ohio Department of Veterans Services.

It was adopted on the same day it was introduced.

**HB 297** introduced on May 20 by Representatives **Kevin Ritter** (HD-94) and **Johnathan Newman** (HD-80).

The Bill would amend section 307.66 of the Revised Code to increase the amount a county may provide to military and veterans organizations for Memorial Day expenses.

More on next Page...



It was referred to the House Veterans and Military Development Committee.

**HR 133** introduced on May 21 by Representative **Johnathan Newman** (HD-80).

The resolution would Honor Battery B, 1st Battalion, 134th Field Artillery Regiment on its One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary.

It was adopted on the same day it was introduced.

## **Legislation In The 136<sup>th</sup> 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 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
  
- 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 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
  
- 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