

December 9, 2025

# LOBBY CALL

**136th General Assembly  
119th US Congress**



# HOUSEKEEPING

- **Be present**
- **Be respectful**
- **Assume good intent**
- **Recognize that the materials, statements, and opinions are private to the organization and should not be shared without specific consent from the League or the speaker**
  - No party shall record, tape, or otherwise capture reproduce or broadcast any audio, video or digital content from this session without specific consent from the League of Women Voters of Ohio.



# **Around the Ohio Statehouse**

**Update of 2025 Since the Budget**

# SB 50:Regards age and schooling certificates; minor work hours



PASSED and sent to Governor: 11/21

**VETOED: 12/3**

**Comments:** GA could still override the veto in February. Allows a 14- or 15-year-old to be employed between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. at any time of the year if the minor has approval to do so from a parent or legal guardian.

Wage for under 16: \$7.25/hr. This bill would use child labor to drive down adult wages by rolling back child labor protections for ages 14-15.

# SB 293: Revise Deadline to Return Absentee Ballots

## **On Governor's Desk: Take Action: Continue to push Gov. DeWine for a veto on SB 293**

Though it has now been several weeks since SB 293, the bill that will close the 4-day acceptance window for absentee ballots and complicate voter roll maintenance procedures, passed in the General Assembly, it is still in limbo, having not yet been sent to Governor DeWine's desk.

- Taking away the 4-day absentee ballot acceptance window would especially hurt Ohio seniors, voters with disabilities, rural voters, college students, and working Ohioans who depend on voting by mail and don't have easy access to their county Board of Elections' drop box.
- Punishing eligible voters who did everything right by getting their votes in on time but had the bad luck to be on a slow mail route is wrong
- Does nothing to make our elections more secure, it only makes our elections less accessible.
- Many voters are likely to be mistakenly flagged as ineligible due to simple clerical errors with the requirements in SB 293, which will not only cancel voter registration for eligible voters it will result in more provisional ballots, more work for Boards of Elections, longer lines on Election Day

# SB 293 Resources

- Stop SB 293 LTE toolkit from Ohio Voter Rights [here](#)
- LWVO's LTE toolkit [here](#)
- LWVO Op-Ed in Columbus Dispatch [here](#)
- LTE's from LWV Athens & ACLU Ohio [here](#) and LWV Akron Area member Sherry McMillen [here](#)

Note: If you write an LTE that speaks for your League, please make sure to send it to LWVO so we can make sure we're all on the same page; you can email Elisabeth at [ewarner@lwvohio.org](mailto:ewarner@lwvohio.org).

## Phone Numbers:

**Gov. DeWine's office: 614-644-4357 or 614-466-3555**

**Gov. DeWine's Deputy Policy Director: 614-644-0929**

**Gov. DeWine's Legislative Affairs Director: 614-466-2828**

# Keeping with Democracy/Elections

Bills Introduced  
Bills Still Active

[HB 601](#): Revise Election Law

[SB 4](#) Create Election Integrity Unit;  
revise election law prosecution

[S. B. 107](#)

Include state, district school board  
members on partisan ballot  
(**Companion bill: HB 153**)

[S. B. No. 153](#)

Require citizenship verification before  
an elector may vote

[SB 63](#), Prohibit Ranked Choice Voting

[SB 260](#): Enact the Voter Registration  
Modernization Act

# HB 186: Regards school district property taxes, school funding formula

## On Governor's Desk

### **Tax credit for property in school districts on 20-mill floor**

- Authorizes a property tax credit for the owners of property located in a school district on the 20-mill floor property tax floor, with the goal of limiting a district's total property tax revenue growth from the floor to the rate of inflation.
- Applies to all eligible property in the state beginning in tax year 2025.
- Authorizes payments to school districts located in counties that underwent a reappraisal or update in tax years 2023 and 2024 so that such districts are temporarily guaranteed to receive at least the same amount of property tax revenue they received in tax year 2024.
- Requires the first installment of those payments to be made from the Expanded Sales Tax Holiday Fund, which the bill appropriates, and cancels any expanded sales tax holiday scheduled to occur in August 2026.

### **Property tax rollbacks**

- Modifies the 10% and 2.5% property tax rollbacks for residential property, with the effect that the total rollback for owner-occupied homes will increase, from 12.5% to 15.38%, and the rollback for all other residential property will be eliminated.



## HB 335: Regards county budget commissions, property and sales tax, funds

### On Governor's Desk

SUBSTITUTE bill:

- Creates a growth cap on inside mills to inflation (LBO estimates that the GDP deflator cap will reduce statewide inside millage revenue by approximately \$120 million to \$135 million in tax year (TY) 2026, \$195 million to \$250 million in TY 2027, and \$305 million to \$378 million in TY 2028.)
- Puts an inflation cap on county-wide inside mills to prevent surges
- Still likely = millions of dollars in loss for local communities / school districts

HB 335 would:

- Gut local services — hurting schools, communities, and first responders
- Create a major "tax shift" by encouraging local governments to find replacement revenue sources from their voters
- [Fiscal analysis](#)
- [Comparison document](#) (comparing different versions of the bill)

# **HB 129 — Limit ability to reallocate certain school property tax millage**

## **On Governor's Desk**

### **AMENDED:**

- Allows districts with substitute levies approved prior to 2026 to renew more than once, up to five years, but not at a sum greater than that collected by the expiring levy.
- Allows fixed-sum levies renewing an emergency levy approved by voters prior to 2026 to be renewed, but removes the option to renew in some cases, including in relation to multiple emergency levies in the same ballot question.
- [Synopsis](#)

### **What it does:**

- HB 129 only allows new emergency and/or substitute levies in certain circumstances
  - Caps these levies at 5 years
- HB 129 adds more types of levies to the 20-mil floor calculation
  - Will likely place more districts above the 20-mill floor
- Example: Right now, 20-mill floor districts can place an emergency levy on the ballot without losing the protections afforded by the 20-mill floor. That would no longer be true under HB 129.

## **HB 309**: Regards budget commissions, property tax, and certain funds

### **On Governor's Desk**

#### **AMENDED to:**

- Enable commissions to reduce voter-approved levies after one year (rather than the prior five years)
  - Requires a public hearing before exercising this authority

#### **WHAT IT DOES:**

- Increases county budget commissions' power
- Amended to include the governor's workgroup proposals
- Expands county budget commission authority to change (reduce) the rate of most voter-approved levies — but only after 5 years of collection and only after public hearings
- Protects districts from being penalized if they go below the 20-mill floor
- Provides safeguards Re: over zealous county budget commissions....
- Essentially “enhances authority to county budget commissions to dial back long-running levies that have been on the books for years.” But also creates safeguards for schools

# Help With Messaging: Why These Bills Should Be Vetoed

**There are dozens of property tax bills moving through the Statehouse right now. None will be effective** unless the Statehouse supermajority recognizes that their tax giveaways to the richest Ohioans are what caused property taxes to rise.

**The state made this mess. They must take on some of the burden of cleaning it up.**

- No proposed “fix” that blames schools, first responders, and/or local communities is acceptable.

**Article:** [“Ohio GOP gave billions in taxes to the rich but refuse to admit that caused our tax crisis”](#)

- "Because Ohio Republicans took billions out of the tax system to give to the wealthy, homeowners have picked up a much greater burden for paying for public schools.....[This] has forced local districts to rely more heavily on property taxes to fund schools.....so Republicans are now decrying the very problem they engineered."

**Analysis:** [Ohio homeowners have lawmakers to blame for property tax mess](#)

- “The kernel of [Ohio’s property tax](#) mess, detailed in another recent report, is this: Ohio homeowners are staggering under ever-higher property taxes not because of runaway school boards, but because the General Assembly has slashed the state’s share of public school costs”

**Ohio has also decreased its share of paying for public education from 47% in FY19 to 32% in FY27**

- School districts are being forced to use more and more property tax dollars in order to survive
- [More notes and references to the OEPI report from Howard Fleeter](#)

# Keeping with Taxes

## Bills Introduced

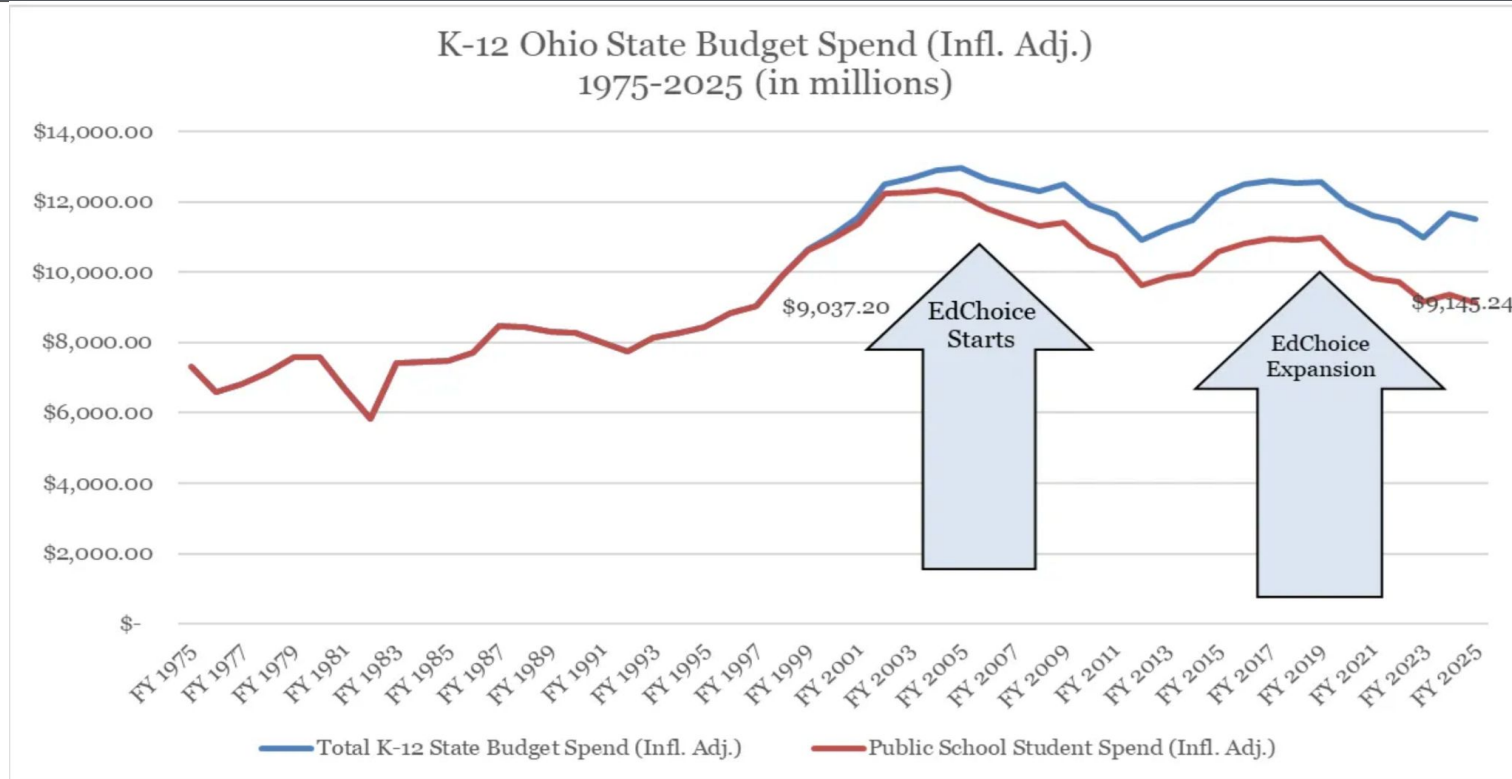
HB 617: Repeal Ohio Capital Gains Tax

HB 590: Modify law on tax appeals and property tax complaints

HB 608: Modify law governing property taxes and other local taxes

HB 355: Increase vote threshold for local taxes subject to voter approval

# Interesting [Dyer Article on School Funding](#)



# Points Made

I wanted to answer this simple question: What year since 1975 has the state spent the closest to last year's amount on its public school children, adjusted for inflation?

Would it surprise you to learn that last year's amount is the lowest spending amount since 1997 — the year the state started using taxpayer dollars to subsidize private school tuition?

Would it also shock you to learn that the amount spent on K-12 public school students has dropped a whopping 16% since Ohio broke open the unconstitutional EdChoice voucher program to make it universal in 2019?

**What the data show clearly is that almost every additional dollar going to the state's K-12 funding since the state started the voucher program in 1997 has gone to fund kids who don't attend the state's public schools<sup>1</sup>.**

The money has instead funded notoriously poor performing, privately run charter schools or unconstitutionally subsidize private school tuitions of students who, in the overwhelming number of cases, never stepped foot in the public schools.

[Read the full post here.](#)

# A Few Bills of Interest

Honesty's Lead

Passed one Chamber and headed to the other:

**HB 486** — Allow public school teachers and public universities to highlight “the influence of Christianity on history and culture”

**SB 34** — Ten Commandments in public schools  
Enacts the “**Display of Founding Documents of Historic Significance Act**” requiring the display of certain documents in Ohio public schools



## HB 486 Enact the Charlie Kirk American Heritage Act

- **STATUS:** Passed the House 11/19. Headed to the Senate
- Would allow educators in public schools and public colleges/universities “to provide instruction on the positive impacts of religion on American history”
- Declares the following to be true:
  - “The teaching of the historical, positive impact of religion on American history is consistent with the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.”
  - “An accurate and historical account of the influence of Christianity on the freedom and liberties ingrained in our culture is imperative to reducing ignorance of American history, hate, and violence within our society.”
  - “Accurate historical instruction regarding verifiable, historical impacts of religion on American history is factual and is not proselytization or a violation of the First Amendment.”
- The bill lists several pages of examples of such instruction (but does not appear to limit educators to these examples)
- **AMENDMENT ADDED on 11/13/25** replacing multiple references to "Christianity" with the words "Judeo-Christian values"

# Ending on a Positive Possibility

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## [SB 332](#) and [HB 610](#)

- SB 322 Sponsor: Cutrona, Smith
- HB 610 sponsors: Brent, McNally
- **SB 322 STATUS:** In Senate Education Committee
- **WHAT IT DOES:** Dissolves academic distress commissions and instead requires student support teams for certain low-performing school buildings
- Positive bill! OEA and community partners helped draft it!



**LWVUS Actions  
Around Congress:**

**The Rise Up Playbook**

# Play Book 3.0: Tuesday Trainings

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- Advocacy Action Kits Overview  
**Dec 11., 2025 3:00 PM Eastern Time**
- National Partnerships for Local Engagement  
**Dec 16, 2025 03:00 PM Eastern Time**
- Partnering for Voter Engagement Ahead of 2026 Elections  
**Jan 20, 2026 03:00 PM Eastern Time**

# Templates & Toolkits

- [Advocacy Action Kits](#) | One-stop-shop for tools and resources--including templates, messaging guidance, and background materials--to support Leagues' action on various pressing advocacy issues.
- [Supporting Immigrant Communities Partner Resources](#) | This collection of partner resources offers practical information and tools to help communities understand and assert their rights. It's designed to help Leagues strengthen local partnerships, support advocacy efforts, and ensure that every person's voice is heard and protected in our democracy.
- [The Community Tool Box](#) | This free service from the Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas provides several step-by-step toolkits to guide collaboration, coalition-building, and community change work.
- [Template Letter to Secretary of State DPOC](#) | Leagues are encouraged to use this template letter to let their Secretary of State know that the League is opposed to documentary proof of citizenship requirements and why it would hurt voters in their state if DPOC were required to register to vote.

# 2026-2028 Program Guidelines

- LWVUS Program 2026-2028: Tips on Navigating the National Program [Recording Here](#) and [Slides Here](#)
- January 21, 2026 Nuts and Bolts of Program Planning Meetings (*Check the [LWV events calendar](#) for registration when it becomes available*)
- [LWVUS Programs, Resolutions, Legislative Priorities](#): An overview of the definitions and process for League program, resolutions, and legislative priorities.
- [Program Planning Guidance for Virtual Meetings](#): This guidance is intended for Leagues that will be conducting their member meetings as virtual events. This guide covers overall guidance for the program, setting up pre-meetings, and tips for planning a virtual meeting and event.

# Latest from the League

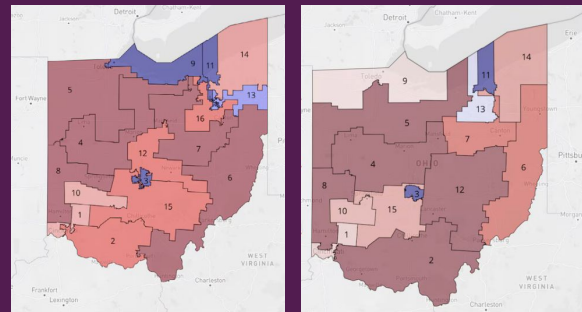
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- [LWVUS Urges Senate to Oppose DPOC](#)
- [LWVUS Sends Letter to Congress Opposing Equal Representation Act](#)
- [League of Women Voters Responds to Supreme Court Allowing Texas's Racist Mid-Cycle Redistricting Map to Take Effect](#)
- [League of Women Voters of Minnesota Opposes ICE Deployment in Minneapolis and St. Paul](#)

# OHIO REDISTRICTING RECAP

## OHIO REDISTRICTING COMMISSION UNANIMOUSLY PASSES NEW CONGRESSIONAL MAP

- Democrats and Republicans made a last-minute deal
- Districts 1, 9, and 13 especially impacted but all shift
- Go to [findmydistrict.ohiosos.gov](https://findmydistrict.ohiosos.gov) to find your district





# NATIONAL REDISTRICTING TRACKER

## MID-CYCLE REDISTRICTING

- TEXAS: R+5
- CALIFORNIA—D+5
- S. CAROLINA—R+1
- OHIO—R+2\*
- UTAH—D+1
- MISSOURI—R+1?

TBD

- INDIANA
- FLORIDA
- MARYLAND

TBD

- NEBRASKA
- KANSAS
- VIRGINIA

TBD

- ILLINOIS



Please visit for [Medicaid School Program webpage](#) for more information about changes to the program effective Jan. 1, 2026:

- [Overview of MSP Updates](#)
- [School Services Plan of Care Form](#)
- [School Services Plan of Care Guidance](#)
- [MSP Services and Rates](#)

The Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) is excited to announce updates to the Medicaid School Program (MSP). Beginning **Jan. 1, 2026**, the Medicaid School Program will include:

- A School Services Plan of Care as documentation of medical necessity for MSP services.
- An updated benefits package that includes additional nursing and behavioral health services and provider types.
- Reimbursement for screening services provided to students enrolled in Medicaid.



*Happy Holidays*  
**Thank You for All You Do**



Enjoy your time with friends and family. We will pick up again January 27th