LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO
471 East Broad St., Suite 1630
Columbus, OH 43215
www.lwvbphio.org

November 10, 2026

LEGISLATION & ADVOCACY

LOBBY CALL





Legislative Scope: Lame Duck

- 136th General Assembly
- 119th US Congress

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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.

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Around the Statehouse

Reminder: Action at the state level is decided by the LWVO Board. Do not assume action and jump ahead of what you hear from the state level.

Preparing for Lame Duck: Terms

Lame Duck Session: The period after an election but before new officials take office.
"Christmas Tree" bill: When multiple bills are added as amendments (like ornaments on a tree) to an existing bill, therefore creating one large bill with multiple parts
2/3 Supermajority: A large majority of lawmakers needed to pass certain types of legislation.
3/5 Supermajority: The Ohio Constitution requires a 3/5 vote of each house to override a veto. Action to override a veto must commence in the bill's house of origin.
Amendment: A proposal to alter the text by substituting, adding, or deleting language.
Backroom Deal: Secret or informal agreements made by lawmakers outside public view.
Bill Rushed Through: Legislation passed quickly with little debate.
Earmark: Funds set aside for specific projects, often added to bills at the last minute.
Emergency Clause: A clause in a bill that makes it effective immediately after passage.
Fast-Track Legislation: Bills pushed through the process quickly, usually without full debate.
Floor amendment: When an amendment is added to a bill on the House or Senate floor during Session - usually done as a way of sidestepping the traditional committee process
Last-Minute Bill: A bill introduced or passed at the end of the legislative session.

Top of Watch List

- **HB 11:** legislative approval of agency rules that cost $100,000 or more
- **HB 775:** ends agencies' general rulemaking authority
- **HB 1024:** moves the Common Sense Initiative to legislative leaders
- **HB 941:** eliminates state jobs left vacant 90 days or more
- **Rumored:** a voucher "right to use" bill letting families sue to enforce EdChoice. No bill yet.

Latest Addition to Bills

HJR11

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT-LOWER VETO OVERRIDE THRESHOLD (Rep. Ron Ferguson) To amend Section 16 of Article II of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to decrease the number of votes required for a veto override.

The Power Grab Bills

HB 775 : Eliminates State Agencies' Ability to Adopt Administrative Rules
Sponsors: Callandar, Dovilla In House Government Com.

HB 1024: Common Sense Initiative

Sponsor: Callandar Introduced

HB 11: Regards legislative rule approval and fiscal analyses of rules

Sponsors: Ferguson, Lorenz Committee: House Government Oversight, Last Hearing: March 2025

The Buckeye Institute: REIN in Unelected Rulemakers

Taken together, they would substantially reduce the independence of Ohio's executive agencies and increase the General Assembly's influence over the development, approval, and continued enforcement of administrative regulations.

The distinction between the bills is important:

- **HB 11** would give the Legislature direct approval authority over certain administrative rules, establish regulatory spending limits, and create additional procedural barriers to rulemaking.
- **HB 775** would narrow or eliminate numerous statutory grants of administrative rulemaking authority, requiring agencies to reconsider existing regulations and limiting their ability to adopt new ones.
- **HB 1024** would transfer the Common Sense Initiative (CSI) Office from the Governor's Office to the legislative branch, giving legislative leadership institutional control over a significant component of regulatory review.

Each proposal would constrain the executive branch differently. Their combined effect would be considerably greater than the sum of their individual effects.

- SB 153 and HB 233 — Ohio's version of the SAVE Act
- HB 299 — Make it harder for Ohioans to circulate citizen ballot initiative petitions
- HB 355 — Requires a 60% vote to pass local ballot levies, rather than a simple majority
- HB 577 — Requires photo ID to mail your absentee ballot, more barriers to voter registration

Voting Issues

Latest from Senator Brenner: SB 491

Introduced in Senate: Nov. 9, 2026 - School Funding and Property Tax
Introduces a new way to fund schools: statewide property tax
Points:

1. Repeals school district property and income taxes in favor of statewide property tax and a higher sales tax (hurts low-income folks)
2. Public and charter schools would get a flat per-pupil payment (seems like return to failed funding system with legislature picking a number)
3. Eliminates EdChoice and the other school scholarship programs and interdistrict open enrollment folding private schools into base funding (try to get around court ruling against EdChoice) - “Backpack” concept??

Don’t think this will go anywhere now, but seems to introduce ideas ahead of budget cycle in next GA.

Concerning Bill: SB 311

Brenner Bill

Already passed the Senate

Covers truancy and cheating

The Problem: This impacts local decision-making with "under utilized" schools and selling of public school buildings

S. B. 107: Brenner. Include state, district school board members on partisan ballot (Companion bill: HB 153)

Why this is a bad bill: This would politicize schools. It would also increase the cost of running for school board since Party $ would flow into races.

These races are nonpartisan in order to focus on the real issues of the school district. Politicizing them would take the focus off the real issues. It would also impact who runs, causing us to lose good candidates who aren't interested in political careers, but passionate about their schools. In some areas, it would give more support to some extremist candidates.

SB 113 K-12 diversity ban HB 155

"to prohibit diversity, equity, and inclusion in public schools." DEI / CRT / SEL

Sponsor: Brenner ®; Status: 3rd hearing in Senate Education 5/19/26 (opponent testimony)

Requires public schools to adopt and enforce a policy that prohibits all of the following:

- Any orientation or training course regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI);
- The continuation of existing or establishment of new DEI offices or departments;
- Using DEI in job descriptions;
- Contracting with consultants or third parties whose role is to promote admissions, hiring, or promotion on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; and
- Replacing any orientation, training, office, or position designated for DEI with one under a different designation that serves the same or similar purposes, or that uses the same or similar means.
- Requires each public school to establish a complaint process for alleged violations of the policy that complies with standards adopted by the Director of Education and Workforce.

Bills Concerning Immigrants

- **HB 1 and SB 88 — Bans immigrants from holding property within 25 miles of pipelines, energy plants, and more**
- **SB 172 — Requires all officials to allow all immigration-related arrests with or without a warrant, even if the person is only "suspected" of being undocumented—Passed the Senate. In the House**
- **HB 42 — Require many agencies (including schools) to collect/report immigration & citizenship data**
- **HB 200 — Require law enforcement and local governments to cooperate with federal immigration policies + punish those who refuse**
- **HB 700 — Bans Legal Aid and other legal services from working with undocumented immigrants**

Possible Veto Overrides

The Ohio Statehouse Republican supermajority could override any DeWine veto since the beginning of this current General Assembly (January 2015)

- **Make it much harder for Ohioans to vote by mail**
- **Budget language making all local school board elections partisan**
- **Budget language forcing libraries to find space to hide books from kids and teens**
- **SB 68 (passed through the budget) — Creates Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs), AKA unregulated vouchers**
- **Budget language punishing school districts that carry over 40% of their operating budget**

HB 1029: ‘Take the Dough, We Gotta Know’ Act

- Sponsors: Rader (D), Pizzulli (R)
- Stage:Introduced
- Content: reporting and testing requirements for chartered nonpublic schools that accept vouchers (**companion bill SB 443**)

These both are bipartisan bills. This is a bill to support.

SB 443: Blessing (R), Smith (D)

Tax Bills Being Watched

SB 66: Include certain levies, taxes in school millage floor calculation
The bill expands the types of levies included in the floor calculation. The effect of these changes, for school districts that impose one or more of these levies, is to increase the total millage that is compared to the 20-mill floor. If the district was previously on the floor, the new calculation may push the district above the floor, **with the result that the district will not see full revenue growth from its voted property tax levies that are affected by the tax reduction factor until the district falls back to the 20-mill floor.**

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

- Changes the requirement of just a simple majority of voters to pass local levies to at least 60%

HB 420 — Enact Taxpayers Freedom Trilogy-Act I
HB 421 — Enact Taxpayers Freedom Trilogy-Act II
HB 422 — Enact Taxpayers Freedom Trilogy-Act III

Messaging Across Tax Bills

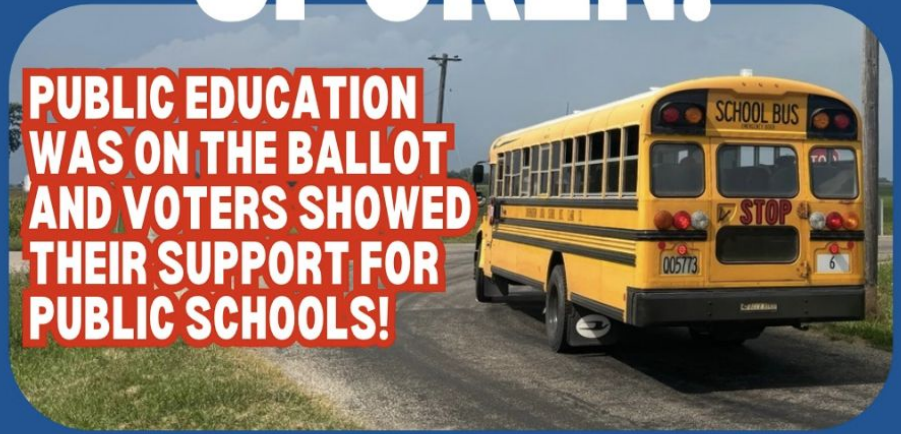
Messaging across the tax bills:

1. The General assembly has caused the problem of overburdening tax payers. The state has provided appropriations for public schools even before (1838) the State Constitution was adopted (1851). In FY 2017 state share was 47% but due to decreases, state share moves to 32% for FY2027. Schools need to make up that difference. If the General Assembly would fully fund the Fair School Funding Formula, it would reduce property taxes. More notes and references to the OEPI report from Howard Fleeter
2. No proposed "fix" that blames schools, first responders, and/or local communities is acceptable. "Ohio GOP gave billions in taxes to the rich but refuse to admit that caused our tax crisis"

Basic Frame for Messages:

1. Lean into Ohioans' shared values of freedom, fairness and community
2. Name the villain and the motivation behind their actions
3. Give voters a sense of agency
4. Demonstrate what is possible when we act together

OHIOANS HAVE SPOKEN!



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING. LET'S **BUILD STRONG OHIO SCHOOLS** TOGETHER!

Messaging Across Education Bills

School funding/vouchers:

Our state should not be granting tax breaks to data centers when our public schools are underfunded

Public dollars for public schools: it is only fair

Middle class Ohioans should not have to pay taxes to support private school tuition for wealthy Ohioans

Private schools should have the same transparency and outcomes reporting requirements as public schools: it is only fair

Ohio’s kids are our future, they deserve the best public schools

If public schools are properly funded, we would have much lower property taxes.

Vouchers have no cap and are growing in cost.

Vouchers guarantee funding for children in private schools but public school students don’t have this guarantee.

Messaging Across Education Bills

Bill (SB 107) creating partisan school board elections:

We should be electing school board members based on their qualifications, not their party.

Partisan school boards are not in the best interest of Ohio's kids. We need to keep politics out of the schools.

There is too much partisanship already, let's focus on what is best for Ohio' students

DEI:

Different perspectives encourage innovation, it is what is best for Ohio schools and communities

Our public schools teach us to live together.

Property tax issues:

Our state should not be granting tax breaks for data centers when Ohioans are struggling to pay their property tax

Best property tax reform is Fair School Funding Plan.

Action on Death Penalty

Crucially, the legislature is not the only branch of government with authority over Ohio's capital punishment system. Under the Ohio Constitution, the Governor has the authority to issue commutations, as well as full pardons and temporary reprieves of death sentences, to those serving prison sentences. **Clemency is a last resort for people on death row, and there is an extreme urgency for meaningful executive action.**

[Take Action: Urge Governor DeWine to use his executive powers to grant clemency to individuals on death row before it's too late.]

ACLU Ohio



Defending a Democracy Under Seige

LWV Webinars

- **2027 Youth Civic Education Grant Applicant Info Session** A brief presentation followed by a Q&A for people interested in learning more about the upcoming Youth Civic Education grant. **November 12 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm ET**
- **Election 2026 Webinar Series** (recordings)

New LWV Resources

- **Local Crisis Response Toolkit** Includes a crisis communications response flowchart, crisis communications/incident response protocol, and sample statements.
- **Media Advisory Template** Media advisories are a short invitation to reporters, assignment desks, and producers to cover a newsworthy event or interview opportunity
- **Sticker Templates** Download LWV-branded sticker designs to hand out when tabling in student- or youth-centric spaces.
- **Tabling Tips & Tricks** General guidance for Leagues when tabling at community events

November Calendar

Native American Heritage Month

11: Veteran's Day

25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Blog: The Sisters Who Inspired International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

26: Thanksgiving

27: Native American Heritage Day

Positions and Priorities

Start of State Convention Planning

Guidance Packet for Local Leagues and ALUs

Any questions, contact Karen Leith, kleith@lwvohio.org, or Pam Wilson, pwilson@lwvohio.org. Please note, we need your thoughts by Feb. 28, 2027.

Planning Document:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vSjTNagOcUrmCDQSG_x12jU-4YNd0oD_WvoLpD_u4G54lgQfm5WFxEfbp-Fpp4_m1i5JAZT-8QxQtMv/pub

Slides: use link -
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vTOst5-Xz1LjaxubQAmXaY16QTDZN9WmluVNuy9BaweG_DYZPcp9AseTVJ9xRhZRWOAoKCHvFpNtJFP/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000

Reporting Form:
the response form https://forms.gle/rUNes9X2w4gi45EQ7 to be completed by February 28, 2027.

Helpful Notes

1. The positions that we currently have are in bold print in the linked Agenda for action. If we haven't been using a position in the current General Assembly, the background and outlook may not have been updated. **You are assessing the position only.**
2. Involve as many people as possible from your League. With so many new members, this is a great way to educate membership on our positions.
3. Hold meetings early enough to gather support from other Leagues if you are proposing a study or update. Read through the points in the packet.
4. Please note that this year the Board has recommended explained pillars for our legislative priorities.

Programs

PMO Wrap-up Revenue Roundtable

December 9, 1-2 PM : 2026 Roundtable Wrap-up!

Know a fellow tax policy fan? Send them this registration link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/yhtU_y1uRxuQOyAqHcs75A

You can find past ones here:

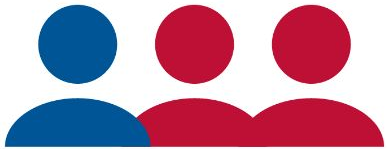
Revenue Roundtable: Ohio Property Taxes

Policy Matters Ohio

Series included many taxing issues.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OHIO

BEYOND ELECTION NIGHT:
HOW OHIO COUNTS EVERY VOTE



ANTONE WHITE, DIRECTOR,
FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

BRIAN MEAD, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
LICKING COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

FAITH LYONS, DIRECTOR
PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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thanks to our partners at the OHIO VOTER RIGHTS COALITION for their support

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OHIO *presents*

advocate *educate* *participate*

LAME DUCK ACTION DAY



December 9 in Columbus

Resources

Data Centers: New Discussion Group in January

- While data centers are essential to the new technology, how they are built and the impact they have on a community can have community input, transparency, good environmental guidelines, an understanding of how they can improve over time, accountability, improve the tax base, etc.
- LWV has many good government and natural resource positions that can be applied. Leagues can have a voice locally and regionally.
- **Peggy Berry has offered to start a discussion group for Leagues** facing AI data centers in order to understand the issue of data centers and what guidelines should be promoted if they are developed. **This group will start in January.**
- **We can start a resource library, plan educational programs and offer guidance to local Leagues. There are Leagues across the country who have some materials, questions, etc. to offer also.**
- **If interested, you can start emailing your interested contact person to advocacy@lwvohio.org. Please give us your League, the person's name and contact information.**

Next Lobby Call

November 24, NOON

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