

Ohio Marine Trades Association
and Government Advantage Group

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

JULY 2023



The Heart of it All Returns

Ohio has announced the return of “The Heart of it All” as the tourism slogan. This replaces the previous brand “Find it Here”. If your business uses the tourism logo on any of your publications, please consider updating it to the new branding logo.

August Election - Don't Forget to Vote

Ohio will be having a special election on August 8, 2023, to vote on Issue 1. The issue proposes to make changes to the process to change Ohio's constitution. It would raise the threshold to amend Ohio's constitution to 60% of the electorate (currently it is 50% plus 1 vote). It would also require signatures to be gathered in all 88 counties to qualify for the ballot. Opposed to Issue 1 are advocates for reproductive health rights and most statewide union organizations. Several large business groups like the Ohio Chamber of Commerce have come out in support of the initiative.

State Budget Finalized

The Ohio legislature and Governor have finalized the biennial State operating budget. This expansive bill includes tax policy changes and the funding levels for all state agencies for the next years. Below are provisions of interest to OMTA.

- Tourism Ohio will remain named as such, but the mission will be promoting not just tourism, but also “living, learning, and working” in Ohio. Since the budget was finalized Matt McClaren, the TourismOhio Director, has resigned to take a position at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.
- Makes changes to the commercial activities tax (phasing in over 2 years a \$6million exemption to the CAT). Excludes, for tax periods beginning in 2024, businesses with taxable gross receipts of \$3 million or less and, for tax periods beginning in 2025 and thereafter, businesses with taxable gross receipts of \$6 million or less from the CAT. Designates the \$3 million and \$6 million thresholds, respectively, as “exclusion amounts,” and excludes the exclusion amount from gross receipts subject to the 0.26% tax rate for taxpayers that remain subject to the tax.
- Makes reductions in the State income tax. The income tax brackets will be reduced from three down to two. Ohioans earning less than \$26,050 annually pay no state income taxes. Those earning up to \$100,000 will now pay 2.75%, and everyone above that salary will pay 3.5%.
- Expands and extends the sales tax holiday and general provides that items under \$500 are included (with some exceptions)
- Prohibits knowingly providing false statements or engaging in any fraudulent act related to a commercial driver's license (CDL) test.
- Provides \$1 million for security enhancements and reimbursements for next April's total solar eclipse. Ohio is directly in the viewing path of the eclipse, and it is expected to draw significant visitors to the state.
- Removes floatation device designation list from 1547.25
- Amends requirements for powercraft to carry fire extinguishers (1547.27)
- Allows 60 days to transfer title, as opposed to 30 days (1548.03)
- Changes what a registrar issues a watercraft trailer from a “placard” to a “license plate” (4503.311)
- Transfers from the Treasurer of State to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles the responsibility to receive sales

and use taxes from the sale of motor vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and all-purpose vehicles that are collected by each clerk of courts.

- Provides \$875,000 per fiscal year for weed reduction for Indian Lake, plus \$125,000 per year for other expense of the Indian Lake Watershed Project.
- Provides robust funding for H2Ohio.
- Generally, protects funding priorities for ODNR. The House had made significant cuts. Michelle Burke testified in the Senate for those to be restored. You can read Ms. Burkes testimony [here](#).

Sales Tax Receipts

The Ohio Department of Taxation has posted sale tax receipts for motor vehicle and watercraft sales and use taxes for the second half of 2022. These numbers for watercraft represent a roughly \$500,000 decrease on collections over the same time period of 2021. And roughly \$2million less than was collect the in the first half of 2022.

Second half of 2022 (July 2022 – December 2022)

	State Collections	Permissive Collections	Total Collections
Collections from sales of motor vehicles	\$1,008,424,615	\$ 249,583,388	\$1,258,008,004
Collections from the sales of watercraft	\$ 12,587,596	\$ 2,925,845	\$ 15,513,441
Totals	\$1,021,012,212	\$ 252,509,233	\$1,273,521,445

Wondering Where to Fish?

Ohio has launched a new on-line database focused on fishing in Ohio. You can also search waterbody reports to look up specific bodies of water and their fish stock. This will help fishers and anglers know which bodies of water will meet their fishing criteria best.