

Ohio Marine Trades Association
and Government Advantage Group

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

JUNE 2025



The conference committee wrapped up their work on the budget late last night/early this morning. The House and Senate will vote on the conference report this afternoon, sending a bill to the Governor for potential vetoes. Below is a summary of provisions and line items OMTA has been tracking.

We are disappointed in the cuts to the H2Ohio Program. OMTA has provided testimony supporting their restoration. However, the 3 primary agencies who administer parts of the program saw reductions in appropriations. The final version also has cuts to other ODNR line items that are being supplanted by revenue from oil and gas leases. There is a welcomed increase in TourismOhio's line item.

The final version includes a Senate proposal to enact a flat income tax rate of 2.75% for anyone earning more than \$26,050 (those making less than that already pay \$0)

The final bill retains a Senate added provision regarding towing boats from the marina to a storage facility. It exempts these tows from the definition of "for hire motor carrier." The transports must meet the following qualifications:

- The marina and storage facility are not more than 10 miles apart.
- It is not drawn or towed faster than 25 mph.
- The boat trailer does exceed 26,001 pounds to qualify for the

The report confirms that the Governor's proposed increases to boat registration fees were not included in the final version. But the bill will increase non-resident hunting license fees from \$74 to \$210 and non-resident fishing licenses as follows: \$49 to \$74 for annual, \$24 to \$50 for three day and \$13 to \$26 for one day.

The proposed cap on the prompt payment sales and use tax vendor discount at \$750 was retained.

The bill will enact a change to have the clerk of courts send sales and use tax collections data to the registrar of motor vehicles as opposed to the tax commissioner.

There was a change proposed in the Governor's budget regarding how tax is collected for watercraft purchases that will be taken out of state. OMTA was successful in advocating for the provision's removal in the House and it was **not** included in the final version.

Line items of interest to OMTA are as follows:

7086 739401 Watercraft Operations	\$ 28,432,898	\$ 28,922,532
7086 725414 Waterways Improvement	\$ 5,782,184	\$ 5,880,807
5TDO 725615 Park Maintenance	\$ 1,540,331	\$ 1,540,331
GRF 725505 Healthy Lake Erie Program	\$ 450,000	\$ 0
5140 725606 Lake Erie Shoreline	\$ 1,694,771	\$ 1,732,863
4U60 725668 Scenic Rivers Protection	\$ 58,860	\$ 58,860
GRF 235402 Sea Grants	\$ 308,000	\$ 308,000
GRF 730321 Parks and Recreation	\$ 27,650,000	\$ 47,650,000
2270 725406 Parks Projects Personnel	\$ 27,500,000	\$ 7,500,000
5140 725606 State Parks Operations	\$ 43,122,931	\$ 43,358,465
5P20 725634 Wildlife Boater Angler Fund	\$ 5,968,330	\$ 5,968,330
5MJ0 195683 TourismOhio	\$ 11,000,000	\$ 11,000,000

H2Ohio Specific Appropriations by agency:

Ohio Department of Agriculture:	\$ 53,600,000	\$ 53,600,000
Lake Erie Commission:	\$ 132,000	\$ 132,000
ODNR:	\$ 21,000,000	\$ 21,000,000
Ohio EPA:	\$ 7,500,000	\$ 7,500,000