



GOVERNMENT ACTION TRACKER

NOV. 2025

Ohio looks at youth workers, hemp, maps and sodium oh my! Congress continually without air in the room as shutdown lingers.

The Ohio General Assembly had an active October, including nearly finalizing hemp regulations, passing state law allowing minors to work later and imploring Congress to do the same, and finalizing new congressional maps. However, a few key topics now see new action, and some have some troubling activity.

As for Congress, at the time of writing, the Federal government is still without a final resolution to resume funding. The Senate did approve a CR and the House is expected to vote to finalize on Wednesday.

Activity We Are Watching

With the end of the year fast approaching, opportunities for the legislature to act on any bills become smaller and smaller. From now until January 1, the Ohio General Assembly is slated to have sessions in both chambers four more times. Two sessions are normal. The other two are if needed, meaning whether they occur depends on the Speaker and Senate President. One thing that is ready to pass before the end of the year is SB 56, which is the bill centered on hemp regulations and details on beverages. That bill has already received passage from the House. Now it sits in a conference committee as the Senate declined to agree with the House changes.

Meanwhile, all eyes watch Congress as everyone awaits some resolution to resume funding the Government. Once normal operations resume, we, alongside the NRA, plan to inform Congress of the need for guidance for restaurant, hospitality and retail operators after the penny's end.

State Update

While the Ohio General Assembly took time focusing on the redistricting conversation, committees still proceeded to hear different topics and issues. As previously mentioned, the House passed out their version of regulations on hemp infused products, revising the tax on beverages to be in line with prepackaged mixed drinks, allowing on-premise consumption, and allowing manufacturers to self-distribute. The conference committee will have final say on what is or is not allowed in the bill. We are pushing to keep many of the same provisions from the House version in conference, while tracking possible federal restrictions on hemp.

Other action coming from the General Assembly, SB 50 and SCR 3 both passed out of the House and now await the Governor's signature. Once SB 50 goes into effect, it would change state law to allow 14- and 15-year-olds to work later than 7pm during the school year with parental permission. However, until the FLSA is changed, operators should default to whichever between state and federal law is more restrictive. Additionally, HB 364, which requires allergens be marked on menu items, received an amendment to require chains (20 or more locations) to mark any menu item that is "high sodium" with a symbol and a warning on each item. We are not in favor of this amendment and the bill, and we will be updating members on when and how to take action to halt this legislation.

Lastly, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) informed business owners recently of a new "technology fee" that will be placed on the wages earned by employees. ODJFS says the purpose of the new fee is to update the State's outdated unemployment system, and the fraud from covid was a result of the outdated system.

A context is provided in our [Technology Fee memo](#).

Ohio Bill Tracking

BILL TRACKING

Child Care Cred

HB 2

Establishes the Child Care Cred Program, share in the cost of childcare

5th hearing held

Imitation Meat & Eggs

HB 10

Regulates imitation meat and egg products

Passed House

Passed by Senate

Awaiting Governor's Signature

Minor Alcohol Sales

HB 19

Reduces the mental state for prohibiting the sale of alcohol to a minor from Knowingly to Recklessly

1st hearing held

Funding Agreements

HB 105

Revise and supplement state regulations concerning non-recourse litigation funding agreements

7th hearing held

Microenterprise

HB 134

To authorize the sale of certain homemade foods under a microenterprise home kitchen enterprise registration

Passed House

Committee, waiting for floor vote

**ORHA Testified Interested Party*

Revise Liquor & Hemp Laws

HB 160

To revise Liquor Control, marijuana and hemp laws

3rd hearing held

**ORHA Testified Interested Party*

Alcohol Franchise Law

HB 194

Revises the Alcohol Franchise Law

2nd hearing held

Hemp Regulation

HB 198

Regulate the manufacture, distribution and sale of ingestible hemp products

3rd hearing held

**ORHA Testified Interested Party*

Construction E-verify

HB 246

Require certain construction industry employers to use E-verify

Passed House

Passed Senate

Committee, waiting floor vote

Ohio Bill Tracking, Continued

BILL TRACKING

PURE LIFE (MAHA)

HB 272

Regards food dyes, PFAS, fluoride, and certain substance releases

1st hearing held

Allergens on Menu

HB 364

Require food service operations to denote certain allergens on their menu (sodium warning label amended in)

2nd hearing held

Sunday Liquor Sales

HB 387

Allow local governments to allow Sunday liquor sales without needing local election approval

1st hearing held

Interview No-Shows

HB 395

Require Job and Family Services to establish an online process for employers to report individuals who do not show for an interview

Introduced

Cash as Payment

HB 554

Require private sellers and government entities to accept cash

1st hearing held

Improve Power Grid

SB 2

To increase Ohio's power generation & improve power grid

Passed Senate

Companion Bill

HB15, passed

Signed by Governor, effective August 12

Alcohol Franchise Law

SB 23

Revises the Alcohol Franchise Law

2nd hearing held

Pay by Cash Option

SB 30

Requires retailers to give customers the option to pay by cash

2nd hearing held

Labor Laws Online

SB 33

Allows employers to post certain labor law notices online

Passed, signed by Governor, effective July 21

Ohio Bill Tracking, Continued

BILL TRACKING

Minor Work Hours

SB 50

Allows an employee who is younger than 16, with parental permission, to work slightly later hours during the school year

Passed Senate

Passed House

Awaiting Governor's Signature

**ORHA Testified in Support*

Marijuana

SB 56

Revise medical and adult-use marijuana laws; levy marijuana taxes. (Now includes SB 86)

Passed Senate

Passed House

Senate did not agree to House changes, moving to conference committee

Hemp Regulation

SB 86

Regulates hemp products, requiring their sale only in dispensaries

Passed Senate

Amended to SB 56 in the House

**ORHA Testified Interested Party*

Minimum Wage

SB 234

Increases the state's minimum wage

Introduced

Hemp Sales

SB 266

Establishes rules and requirements for the testing and sale of intoxicating hemp products

Introduced

Minor Work Hours

SCR 3

Allow employees younger than 16 to work slightly later hours during the school year

Passed Senate

Passed House

**ORHA Testified in Support*

Federal Update

The end of the longest government shutdown is potentially within sight. The Senate is poised to approve three continuing resolutions (CRs) to resume government functions.

Unfortunately, the CRs are not likely to be completely clean funding bills. The bill for agriculture intends to ban all hemp products that are not for industrial use. This shift would halt the THC beverage industry that has been growing over the past few years. While we are working with our national partners to address the change, current indications show any current effort to change it would be unlikely. However, passage of the agriculture CR would not be the end of the conversation. Implementation of the ban goes into effect one year after the finalization of the bill. During that time there could be a turning of the tides on this topic. We will continue to monitor and advocate for regulations and use of THC in beverages. The full bill can be read [here](#), and the hemp language starts on page 129.

Other important national news centers around the continued uncertainty of cash since the penny's halt. The NRA has joined a coalition of other business groups to pressure Congress to pass legislation providing guidelines to retailers on how to handle cash transactions in lieu of the penny's pause. Watch Sean Kennedy, Executive VP of Public Affairs for the NRA, [discuss the issue](#). ORHA Board member, Jimmy Harmon of Bennett Enterprises (Tony Packo's and Burger King), spoke with the Wall Street Journal recently about how they have been responding to the penny shortage. The story is available [here](#) but will require a subscription.

Federal Bill Tracking

BILL TRACKING

No Tax on Tips

H.R. 482/S.129

Eliminate the application of the income tax on qualified tips

Included in the One Big Beautiful Bill signed by the President.

GENIUS Act

S. 1582

Crypto currency regulation

Signed by President

Dignity Act

H.R. 4393

Immigration reform

Introduced

Higher Wages

S. 2013

Higher Wages for American Workers Act

Introduced, in Senate consideration

EWEA

H.R. 5494

Essential Workers for Economic Advancement Act

Introduced

Questions?

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