



GOVERNMENT ACTION TRACKER

FEB. 2026

Quiet month in Ohio government. Congress contemplates swipe fee reform before debate and amendments tightened, supplemental visas allowance released for the year.

January was a slow and uneventful month for Ohio's General Assembly. The Senate's plans to return to work in the last week of the month faltered when the massive snowstorm hit and they resumed activity on the week of February 9. The House officially resumed business with a slate of committee hearings.

At the federal level, Congress continued action, with more conversations about cryptocurrencies providing potential for movement of the Credit Card Competition Act (CCCA).

Activity We Are Watching

The Ohio General Assembly is in full swing this month. Committees and sessions resume with some different bills and topics slated for action early in the year. The House is currently working to unify Ohio tax law with Federal tax law, however that does not currently appear to include no tax on tips or overtime. Senators are working with the Governor's office to try to find some middle ground on the working hours for 14- and 15-year-olds. More information on these issues and the THC veto override are in the State Update portion below.

As the Ohio General Assembly is returning to work, a few new bills have been added to the tracker. A few bills in the Senate are targeting credit card surcharges and "junk" fees much like the old FTC rule that would have provided transparency for fees. And one recently introduced bill will require liquor license holders to provide low or no cost kits to test for date-rape drugs in drinks. We are engaged in the conversations surrounding these bills, sharing how they impact restaurants.

At the Federal level, most of our eyes are turning towards the Public Affairs Conference in March. If you would like to register for the conference, do so [here](#). The National Restaurant Association has homed in on the CCCA, immigration reform and tariffs as the big topics of focus. Additionally, whispers in the Senate hint that there is a potential extension in the works for the THC ban Congress passed back in November. We will keep an eye out for any introductions or changes to Federal law as those will impact the State's actions.

State Update

Hemp-THC

Alongside our brewery members, we have been working to get the legislature to consider a veto override on the beverage extension of SB 56. Current conversations appear successful, however the biggest hangups appear to be coming out of the House. In the meantime, we are still running our [outreach campaign](#) to connect you with your state legislators. Please feel free to use the campaign to share your stories with them and their offices.

Youth Workers

We've been working with Senator Tim Schaffer and the Governor's office on a compromise to expand working hours for 14 and 15-year-olds (SB 50). Discussions are currently focused on expanding weekend working hours for this age group. The language is currently only in the drafting phase, but we will be sure to highlight it once it is publicly available.

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

*Passed House,
awaiting action in
the Senate*

Microenterprise

HB 134

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

*Passed House,
awaiting action in the
Senate
*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
Awaiting Governor's
Signature*

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

1st hearing held

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 now

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, in effect now

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

Vetoed by Governor

**ORHA Testified in Support*

Marijuana

SB 56

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

Conference report approved by both chambers

*Signed by the Governor, THC phase out line-item vetoed (*SB 86)*

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

Disclosure of Fees

SB 336

Requires the disclosure of mandatory fees or surcharges in customer transactions

Introduced

Surcharge Fees

SB 337

Requires the disclosure of credit card surcharge fees

Introduced

Drink Testing

SB 348

Require bars & restaurants to carry drink testing devices

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

January saw another near shot to getting movement with the CCCA in yet another bill covering cryptocurrencies. Unfortunately, those efforts fizzled before having a chance to come to fruition. We will be advocating for the CCCA at the NRA's Public Affairs Conference. Registration is still open [here](#).

Additionally, we hosted U.S. Senator Jon Husted for a roundtable in Zanesville. Multiple operators gathered at Giacomo's and discussed the importance of the business provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill and the help that no tax on tips and overtime is for the employees of hospitality businesses. Giacomo's owner and ORHA Board Chair, Adrian Adornetto, joined Senator Husted in discussing the same topics with local media. You can read more [here](#).

Lastly, US Departments of Homeland Security and Labor issued a final temporary rule, authorizing some 64,700 H-2B visas for the fiscal year to address seasonal labor shortages. Businesses who can attest that they either will or are suffering irreparable financial losses can apply for an H-2B visa. Employers must submit a [new form](#) regardless of whether the form has been filed before.

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.

Tipped Employees

H.R. 2313

Clarifies federal law preventing 80/20/30 from returning

Cleared for floor vote

Common Cents Act

H.R.3074/ S.1525

Stop minting pennies

Introduced in both chambers, passed in House Committee

Save Local Business Act

H.R. 4366

Establishes clear “direct and immediate control” for determining joint employer status

Cleared for floor vote

Dignity Act

H.R. 4393

Immigration reform

Introduced

EWEA

H.R. 5494

Essential Workers for Economic Advancement Act

Introduced

GENIUS Act

S. 1582

Crypto currency regulation

Signed by President

Higher Wages

S. 2013

Higher Wages for American Workers Act

Introduced, in Senate consideration

Credit Card

Competition Act

To be reintroduced

Questions?

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