

**Ohio Library Council  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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ITEM NO.: **6.E.1**

MEETING DATE: **March 13, 2026**

SUBJECT: **Government and Legal  
Services Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Jay Smith**

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**REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

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ODT Posts March 2026 PLF Distribution

The Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT) posted the March 2026 Public Library Fund (PLF) distribution of \$40,419,668 – which is \$393,641 (or +0.98%) above ODT's original estimate that was issued in July 2025 and ODT's updated estimate issued in December 2025 that went unchanged.

According to the Office of Budget and Management (OBM), the state's General Revenue Fund (GRF) tax receipts for February 2026 came in \$3.3 million or 0.2% above estimate. This means the total GRF tax receipts to-date for FY 2026 are \$648.8 million or 3.3% more than expected. State revenues are continuing to exceed expectations as we enter the final third of FY26.

A look at the PLF distribution for the past three years and a link to an Excel spreadsheet listing each county's distribution total for March 2026 can be found on the [OLC website](#).

Pending Legislation

**House Bill 137 & HB 466**

House Bill (HB) 137, sponsored by Rep. Brian Lorenz (R-Powell), presents a serious threat to Ohio's public libraries by granting sole authority to a library taxing authority to decide whether a library may place a property tax levy on the ballot. If passed, HB 137 would effectively silence both public libraries and local voters by removing the public's right to vote on a levy. HB 137 passed the House Local Government Committee on Oct. 29, 2025. At this point, the legislation has not been placed on the floor calendar for a House vote.

**HB 466**, sponsored by Reps. Beth Lear (R-Galena) and Kevin Ritter (R-Marietta), is like HB 137 which specifies that any local taxing authority whose membership includes nonelected officers to obtain approval by the elected body (taxing authority) before submitting a property tax to voters. This bill recently received its first hearing in the House Local Government Committee on March 4.

**House Bill 314 – Disruptive Public Records Requests**

House Bill (HB) 314, sponsored by Reps. Dani Isaacsohn (D-Cincinnati) and Sharon Ray (R-Wadsworth), provides a judicial framework for responding to public records requests that are deemed to be harassing or disruptive.

The legislation empowers public offices and people responsible for public records to seek a court order to limit or deny a public records request where the 1) requester submits multiple requests to the same office, and 2) based on the volume or repeated nature of the requests

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is determined to harass or disrupt the essential functions of the public office. Exceptions under the bill are provided to legitimate requesters such as journalists.

Additionally, HB 314 permits a public office to engage with a private contractor to respond to voluminous public records requests on behalf of the public office while allowing the cost of the contractor's services to be included in calculating the cost of providing the copy of the public record. The bill is currently being heard in the House Judiciary Committee.

#### **House Bill 413 – Local Government Database**

House Bill (HB) 413, sponsored by Reps. Tom Young (R-Washington Twp) and Bob Peterson (R-Sabina), seeks to establish the Ohio Local Government Expenditure Database and requires certain political subdivisions, including public libraries, to participate.

Currently, the Treasurer of State operates the State and Local Government Expenditure Database known as "Ohio Checkbook". This bill splits that database into two separate databases, the State Government Expenditure Database and the Local Government Expenditure Database and requires both databases to include revenue information. OLC submitted testimony highlighting concerns with funding and the possibility of cybersecurity issues. The bill is currently receiving hearings in the House Technology and Innovation Committee.

#### **House Bill 420 – Eliminates Continuing Levies**

House Bill (HB) 420, sponsored by Reps. Gary Click (R-Vickery) and Bernard Willis (R-Springfield), seeks to eliminate continuing term levies after tax year 2029. The bill allows any continuing levy to be renewed for a specific period of years and prohibits any new continuing levies after the bill's effective date. It is currently being heard in the House Ways and Means Committee.

#### **House Bill 422 – Voter Approval Thresholds**

House Bill (HB) 422, sponsored by Reps. Gary Click (R-Vickery) and Jonathan Newman (R-Troy), aims to adjust voter approval thresholds for new levies based on the amount of millage being considered.

- Levies under 1 mill will continue to require a simple majority.
- Levies between 1 and 1.9 mills will require a 60% majority.
- Levies that are 2 mills or more will require a 66% approval.

HB 422 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee and has not received any hearings.

#### **House Bill 574 – Consolidation Pilot Program**

House Bill (HB) 574, sponsored by Reps. Jack Daniels (R-New Franklin) and Mike Dovilla (R-Berea), appropriates \$25 million to encourage the merger of subdivisions under a Policial Subdivision Consolidation Incentive Grant Pilot Program. Based on a formula included in the bill, a city, village or township could receive up to \$2.5 million for a merger. All other political subdivisions, including libraries, could receive a grant for up to \$1 million for a merger. HB 574 received its first hearing on Feb. 18 in the House Local Government Committee.

#### **House Bill 583 – Online Library Databases**

House Bill (HB) 583, sponsored by Reps. Kevin Ritter (R-Marietta) and Jonathan Newman (R-Troy), provides compliance requirements for entities that provide digital or online library database resources to a public school, public library, or state agency.

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Under the bill, only providers that meet the compliance requirements can be utilized to offer resources to minor children. In addition, the bill sets a procedure under which a public school, library, or state agency must notify a provider of a violation and issue penalties if the provider does not comply. HB 583 received its first hearing on March 3 in the House Finance Committee.

#### Constitutional Amendment to Eliminate Property Taxes

In response to the Citizens for Property Tax Reform initiative, OLC and other local governments have been meeting to organize opposition against the amendment should it make it to the ballot. More information will be discussed at the Board Meeting.

#### OLC Library Legislative Day (March 18)

Library Legislative Day is next week on Wednesday, March 18 at the Renaissance Columbus Downtown Hotel. More details will be discussed at the board meeting.