



# Ohio Municipal League

*Our Cities and Villages ★ Bringing Ohio to Life*

June 19, 2015

Senator Bill Coley  
HB64 Conference Committee

Senator Coley:

On behalf of the OML Board of Directors and our member municipalities, we are writing to ask that reconsideration be given to several budget items that have been added to sub.HB64, the proposed state operating budget bill, currently before you. The areas highlighted below include changes that, if were to be included in the final, enacted version of the budget bill, would further compromise the ability of municipalities to deliver the quality services business and resident constituents depend upon daily without increasing the financial burden through higher local tax rates.

The most objectionable policy changes proposed in the current budget language relate to the “redirection” of Local Government Fund (LGF) distribution amounts specifically dedicated to municipalities that will now be siphoned away from the locales that are instrumental in generating the state revenue amounts making the program possible. Ohio municipalities are once again being told that they must “pick-up the slack” and have more revenue withheld to support perceived financial deficiencies in other government entities, to fund new state mandates applied to a universe of service providers and as a punitive measure meant to punish autonomous political subdivisions. Specifically, the following provisions included in HB64 will take more LGF revenue from service providing municipalities:

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3. \$2 million over the biennium “redirected ” from the LGF municipal distribution to implement key recommendations of the Governor’s Community Police Relations Task Force including financing the creation and operation of a database and public awareness campaign.
4. The league objects to language incorporated in HB64 financially penalizing municipalities that have conformed to new state statutes regulating the use of electronic traffic devices by withholding LGF distribution. The league believes this is a reckless attack on the Home Rule provision of the Ohio Constitution and will only perpetuate future constitutional challenges.

The Ohio Municipal League objects to language added late in the budget hearing process that we believe has not been vetted extensively enough through the legislative process to determine the full impact to municipal worker’s compensation rates and premiums required of our local governments. Specifically, portions of SB5 has been inserted into the state budget bill, legislation making the mental affliction of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) an eligible condition covered through workers' compensation benefits for peace officers and other first responders, regardless of

the presence of a physical injury. The league shares the concerns put forth by the Administrator of BWC, which have been expressed during committee hearings held on the proposal that this inclusion of covered conditions will place a significant strain on the state insurance program causing an undetermined increase in public employer rates. We are hopeful this provision is removed from the state operating proposal and more study is given to the change.

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Susan J. Cave  
Executive Director



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Representative Kirk Schuring  
HB64 Conference Committee

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Executive Director



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Representative Denise Driehaus  
HB64 Conference Committee

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Senator Michael Skindell  
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Representative Ryan Smith  
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