

THE CORD REPORT

The official quarterly newsletter of CORD



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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2019 marked the beginning of the 133rd General Assembly. Newly elected Governor Mike DeWine kicked off with the introduction of the main operating budget (HB 166), the multi-billion-dollar spending package for state functions over the next two years. In the bill, Governor DeWine proposed an innovative program to address the water quality issues facing the state. Dubbed "H2Ohio," the plan called for a \$900 million investment in water quality improvements over the next ten years. Lawmakers spent nearly five months debating HB 166, and during that time, revised the H2Ohio plan to include \$172 million over the next two years. This funding will be allocated to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Agriculture, and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency.

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LARRY LONG: DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In November, Larry Long accepted the position as the new Director of Membership Development for The Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts (CORD). Long's primary function will be to enhance membership by encouraging regional district's around the state to join CORD.



Larry Long, CORD Director of Membership Development

“As a former retiree, I genuinely missed being on the road and helping communities improve. This role at CORD will allow me to reconnect with local districts by letting them know they can have a voice with the legislative issues that impact them.

You may know Long from his 40 years of service with the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO). He was Assistant Director, Chief Lobbyist and was appointed Executive Director from 1986 until he retired in 2013.

His prior work experience includes holding multiple positions at the Ohio Department of Economic and Community Development and several titles, including Executive Director, at the Ottawa County Regional Planning Commission.

Long also held a position with the United States Department of Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C. as an Intelligence Specialist during the Vietnam conflict.

Larry is a native of Wadsworth, Ohio, and graduated from The Ohio State University with a BA in Geography.

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WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts (CORD) named two new members to the CORD Board of Directors on Friday, October 25, 2019. New members appointed are Kimberly Stiles, District Manager of the Allen Water District in West Central, Ohio and Laura Kunze, Sharon Township Chair and Trustee.



Kimberly Stiles

Kimberly Stiles is the District Manager for the Allen Water District in Lima, Ohio. Prior to that, she served at the district as the clerk of the board. Stiles was employed at the Allen County Department of Job and Family Services. She holds a Bachelors in Business Administration and Management from the Ohio State University.



Laura Kunze

Laura Kunze currently serves as Chair of the Sharon Township Board of Trustees. She also has extensive experience in program development and operational experience in business settings, including her current role as a Practice Administrator for Comprehensive Eyecare of Central Ohio. She also serves as a board member on the Mount Air Water District and is the current secretary of the Franklin County Township Association. Kunze holds multiple degrees including a Masters in Business Administration from the Fisher College of Business at the Ohio State University and a Masters in Expressive Arts Therapies from Lesley College.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

The Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts (CORD) supported the H2Ohio plan and testified in support during the budget process. CORD also developed and advocated for amendments to the budget bill that would improve the operations of 6119 districts. The amendments would allow regional districts to coordinate with private entities on water and wastewater projects as well as provide clarity over what types of financial assistance programs can be offered by 6119 districts. HB 166 became controversial as the House and Senate were unable to agree on a tax proposal. The impasse led to the legislature missing the June 30th Constitutional deadline to pass a budget, requiring the passage of a continuing budget until HB 166 was finally passed and signed by the governor in the middle of July.

In addition to the main operating budget, lawmakers also spent the first half of 2019 passing a transportation budget, which included an extremely contentious plan to increase the gas tax. Legislators also passed HB 6, one of the most controversial pieces of legislation in recent memory, aimed at providing financial support to Ohio's two nuclear power plants. CORD was extremely active lobbying during the first half of 2019, publicly testifying on five bills and closely monitoring dozens of others. CORD has been one of the chief advocates of HB 7, a bill designed to establish a long-term funding mechanism for the governor's H2Ohio plan, which was created in the state operating budget (HB 166). CORD has also supported HB 264, a bill allowing water and sewer systems to refinance loans through OWDA. CORD also provided proponent testimony on two Senate bills, the first establishes a statewide watershed management plan (SB 2) and the other protects critical infrastructure facilities (including water and wastewater treatment facilities) from vandalism (SB 33).

Lawmakers recessed briefly over the summer but returned in October to begin what will likely be a robust legislative agenda until the winter holidays. We anticipate the legislature will continue its work to pass HB 7, the H2Ohio funding proposal, which is currently pending in the Senate. Governor DeWine also announced the Ohio STRONG legislative proposal in response to the Dayton shooting in August. "STRONG Ohio" stands for safety protection orders, thorough background checks, rigorous due process, ongoing help to those in crisis, new state background checks, and greater penalties for gun crimes. The House and Senate also have multiple workforce development bills that could be passed by the end of the year. The DeWine Administration and lawmakers have also started the process of developing a capital budget bill, which appropriates resources to state-owned infrastructure as well as other community projects. The highly anticipated capital budget bill is expected to be introduced in January or February of next year.

CORD will continue to assist, protect and advance the interests of Ohio's regional water and sewer districts. Through its lobbying efforts, CORD has been able to modify and defeat legislation that would be harmful to districts' operations. CORD also advocates for legislation advantageous to districts and the customers they serve. Please contact us at **614.464.4414 ext. 5** with any questions or concerns.



MEMBER NEWS



NEORS

EXCITING NEWS, BORING
HEADLINE

ENORMOUS CUTTERHEAD IS
300,000 POUNDS, LOWERED
200 FEET, PREPPED TO BORE
THROUGH 2 MILES OF ROCK,
NBD.

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NEORS

Restoring streams
for clean water

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NWWS

THE DISTRICT JOINS
SUBURBS IN SIGNING 40-
YEAR WATER AGREEMENT
WITH THE CITY OF TOLEDO

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