



SANITARY ENGINEERS WINTER CONFERENCE

James Kennedy & Jon Honeck

HB 635- REINSTATEMENT OF OHIO WATER & SEWER ROTARY LOAN PROGRAM



❖ Sponsor- Representative Swearingen

- House Committee 6,25,2023 / 1st Hearing- 12,3,2024
- The Ohio Water and Sewer Rotary Loan Program (OW&SRLP) provided a 0.0% loan to counties, municipalities and 6119 water and sewer districts which allowed the deferral of special assessments relating to water and sewer extension projects.
- This program was ended in 2012 under former Governor Kasich which was previously under the Ohio Department of Development.
- The program will support Ohio EPA's Regionalization Initiative by enabling rural communities to create a larger and more stable water and sewer system.
- The program will be self-sustaining once re-established through the recoupment of deferred agricultural district assessments that are collected when the agricultural parcel changes use.



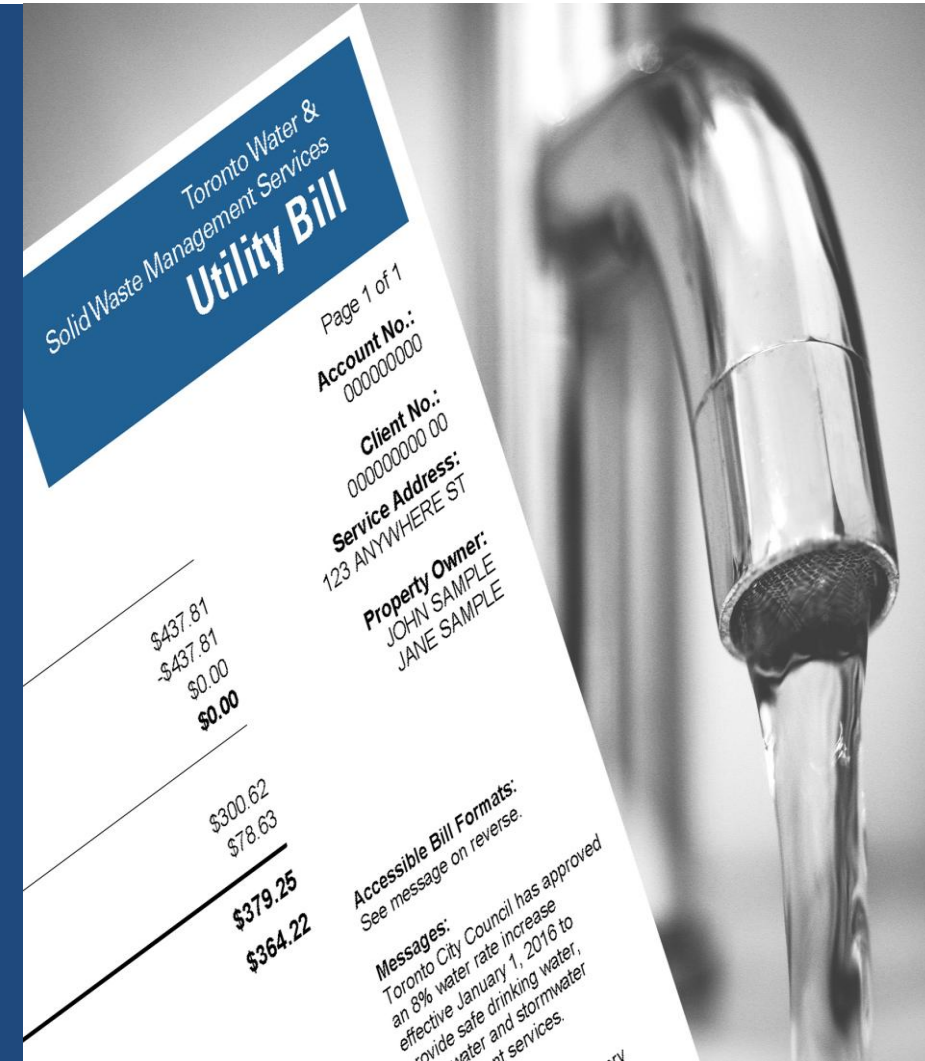
HB 93- LIMITATIONS ON RECOVERY AND LIEN IMPOSITION BY MUNICIPALITIES



- ❖ Sponsors- Representative McClain & Representative Johnson
 - House Chamber Passed 12,13,2023 /Vote 63-25
 - Senate Local Government Committee- 3rd Hearing 11,19,2024
 - A lien filed from a municipal authority may be certified by the County Auditor under the following circumstances:
 1. Property owner occupies the residence.
 2. Property owner agreed to pay all unpaid rates and charges.
 3. The municipality attempted to mitigate any unpaid rates or charges by adhering to its protocol for terminating service for delinquent payments.
 4. The municipality attempted to collect any unpaid rates or charges before proceeding against the property owner.
 - A lien cannot be placed on a property that the homeowner does not reside in. However, a lien can be placed on owner occupied property as long as the owner was notified by the municipal authority prior to the lien being placed on the property.
 - Allows a municipal authority to track individuals with unpaid rates or

HB 93- CONTINUED

- The Service provider will have 10 business day to respond to the complaint. If the complaint is not resolved to the complaining person's satisfaction, an appeal may be filed with the county or municipal court when the amount is \$300 or greater.
- The county or municipal court must also hear appeals in situations where the property owner is held responsible for payment when a tenant fails to make payment for municipal services.
- The count or municipal court must rule in favor with the property owner under the following circumstances:
 - Unpaid rates or charges did not arise from a contract with the property owner.
 - Property Owner did not reside in the property under contract.
- The municipal authority must pay attorney's fees if the municipal or county court finds for the property owner.



SB 85- COUNTY SEWER DISCOUNTED RATES



❖ Sponsor- Senator Ingram

- First Hearing- Senate Local Government Committee, 6/28/2023
- Allows a Board of County Commissioners to expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates to the following individuals:
 1. People aged 65 or greater.
 2. Low to moderate income (Defined by OHFA)
 3. Temporary Hardship
- Current Law- Board of County Commissioners have the ability to reduce county sewer rates on individuals that are 65 years or older and qualify for a homestead exemption or meet the threshold of low to moderate income.



HJR 8- OHIO PUBLIC WORKS STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM BALLOT ISSUE

- Sponsors- Representative Troy & Representative Oelslager
- The State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP) was created in 1987 and renewed three times (1995,2005,2014) .
- The SCIP uses state general obligation bonds to fund the program. This requires approval from Ohio voters to all allow the issuance of the bonds.
- The Program roughly funds 400 projects annually serving improvements to roads, bridges, culverts, water supply systems, wastewater systems, storm water collection systems, and solid waste disposal facilities.
- Eligible Applicants- Counties, Cities, Villages, Townships, and Water and Sewer Districts (ORC 6119 or 6117)
- For 31 years the SCIP has been on the same ballot schedule, which has the potential of being threatened this cycle. The Ohio Public Works Commission would like to be on the ballot no later than the May election in 2025.
- Senate passed SJR 4 and House passed HJR 8 – allow up to \$250 million in debt to be issued each year for 10 years



CCAO LAME DUCK PRIORITIES

- **County Elected Official Increases:** CCAO supports the OCCO proposal to increase all county elected official's salary by 6% each year until 2028.

Based on CCAO estimates, an annual 6% raise through 2028 would bring county row officer salaries within 1.5% of where they would be if salaries were more closely tied to inflation.

- **County Omnibus Bill HB 497:** This bill has received 2 hearings after passing the House unanimously. The legislation addresses some less controversial clean-up fixes in the Revised Code that affect counties, including where certain building plans are maintained, the process for approving certain county-owned building plans, minor contracting clean-ups, and clarifying certain terms and fees regarding the county coroner.



136TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY STATE OPERATING BUDGET PREVIEW

- **Full County Reimbursement for Indigent Defense-** Ohio Public Defender Commission has requested additional funding in the reimbursement line to bring reimbursement in the 90% range. For FY 25, Counties are receiving 78% reimbursement. OPD has also submitted language for creating a state-administered pilot program in certain counties.
- **Jail Construction Grants-** CCAO supports the creation of a dedicated, ongoing revenue source for jail construction and renovation.
- **Next Generation 9-1-1 –** Continue Financial Support for Next Generation 9-1-1 Technology Upgrades and Ongoing Operational Costs. The previous budget included increasing and expanding a 9-1-1 user fee to fund these projects. However, the initial revenue from the fee has yielded less than 50% of what was anticipated by the General Assembly.
- **Child Care –** CCAO supports increasing access to Child Care by increasing eligibility up to 200% of the federal poverty line (FPL).



Welfare- To assist counties in addressing the placement crisis, CCAO supports a Child Protection Allocation (SCPA) by \$30 million per year and include language requiring the SPCA to be "not less than" \$185 million per year.