



2024 ACOG LEGISLATIVE POWER BRUNCH REPORT



- 150 Invitees
- 115 RSVP
- LEGISLATORS: 21
- BOD Members: 20
- GUESTS: 45
- STAFF: 14
- TOTAL ATTENDEES: 100

EVENT PICTURES



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2024 OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE CALENDAR



Monday, February 26, 2024 - Deadline for HBs/HJRs Out of Subcommittee

Thursday, February 29, 2024 - Deadline for HBs/HJRs Out of Standing Committee

Thursday, March 14, 2024 - Deadline for Third Reading of Bills and Joint Resolutions in Chamber of Origin

Monday, April 8, 2024 - Deadline for SBs/SJRs Out of Subcommittee

Friday, April 12, 2024 - Deadline for SBs/SJRs Out of Standing Committee

Friday, April 19, 2024 - Deadline for SBs/SJRs Out of Full A&B Committee

Thursday, April 25, 2024 - Deadline for Third Reading of Bills and Joint Resolutions from Opposite Chamber

Friday, May 31, 2024 - Sine Die Adjournment

KEY LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS

A STATEWIDE REVOLVING LOAN FUND

HB 4064 (Wallace) is a proposed Statewide Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to be administered by each of the 11 statewide Oklahoma Councils of Government.

The Oklahoma Small Business Expansion and Jobs Act will utilize a one-time appropriation of \$16.6M to create 11 separate \$1.36M RLFs that are designed to support their regions.

This proposed RLF program will:

- Target small businesses of 50 employees or less to provide low-interest loans and gap financing
- COGs will collaborate with local financial institutions to provide key loans to local, small businesses that support community efforts and spur economic growth
- The proposed legislation also names the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) as the reporting and administration agency where each COG will submit quarterly loan reports

STATUS: Passed House, engrossed to Senate. Senator Hall named as author.

SUSTAIN STATE GROCERY SALES TAX



TAX RELIEF

ACOG is in favor of a fair and reasonable taxation policy.

Our municipal member governments are highly concerned that removal of the state sales tax on groceries will precipitate a political initiative to eliminate the municipal sales tax on groceries, as well.

This is why we are in opposition to **any legislation that would remove the state sales tax on groceries.**

STATUS: HB 1955 (McCall) passed the Senate on February 22. Signed by the Governor on February 27.

The bill eliminates Oklahoma's 4.5% state grocery tax and will put a moratorium on the ability of cities and counties to raise their sales taxes on groceries until July 1, 2025.

Sen. Mary Boren (Norman) voted against the bill. "Local cities and towns will increase the tax once the moratorium expires, eliminating any savings to the taxpayer. In addition, the state still needs to make additional investments in services," she said.

MUNICIPAL SANITARY SEWER STANDARDS & LITIGATION



ENCOURAGING MUNICIPALITIES TO MAINTAIN & UPGRADE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS

The purpose of **HB 3049 (Boles)** & **SB 1650 (Paxton)** is to establish reasonable and achievable standards for municipal sanitary sewer system operation that can also protect municipal revenues from nuisance claim litigation attacks. These bills are strongly supported by the **Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group (OMAG)**.

Multiple municipalities in the ACOG region and across the state have battled million-dollar personal injury damage claims of annoyance and inconvenience in court.

STATUS: HB 3049 has not been voted out of committee. SB 1650 passed the Senate General Govt. Committee on Feb. 22.

SUPPORTING RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS



VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER RETIREMENT

ACOG supports **SB 1524 (Green)** which would allow retired volunteer firefighters to continue volunteering without incurring certain reductions in their benefits and bars those individuals from serving as a fire chief.

STATUS: Passed Senate Committee.

CONTROLLED BURNS

SB1526 (Green) adjusts the processes for conducting controlled burns in consultation with the Forestry Division and shields agents of the division from liability exposure when combating fires or overseeing controlled burns.

STATUS: Passed Senate Committee & Floor. First House Floor Reading on Feb. 20.

FIGHTING CHANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS

ACOG supports **HB 3573 (Pae)** that creates the Fighting Chance for Firefighters Act. It requires a plan offered by the Employees Group Insurance Division of OMES to provide coverage for annual comprehensive cancer screenings for lung, prostate, testicular, skin, colon, and breast cancer.

STATUS: Passed House A&B Health Subcommittee.



VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER INSURANCE POOL

ACOG supports **SB 1333 (Hall)** which transfers the Volunteer Firefighter Group Insurance Pool into the OMES Comprehensive Professional Risk Management Program.

STATUS: Passed Senate Appropriations & Budget.

INTEROPERABLE RADIOS

ACOG supports carryover legislation **SB 966 (Coleman)** which provides a revolving loan fund for an interoperable radio system that can be used by all state departments and public safety officials.

STATUS: Not brought to committee for a vote.



SALE FOR RESALE

ACOG supports **SB 2025 (Rader)** which would give the Oklahoma Tax Commission the authorization to revoke or suspend a sales tax permit based on reporting activity. **This would improve the use of the sales for resale sales tax exemption and increase the efficiency of tax collection for municipalities.**

STATUS: Substituted in Committee with new proposed legislation that would eliminate the requirement that a producer pay tax on oil produced but not sold. The Sale for Resale Tax Bill is no longer active legislation.



COMMONSENSE TEST FOR LEGISLATION:

For decades local governments have fought a losing battle to prevent unfunded mandates that both the state and federal governments frequently enact.

Last session, **HB 2786 (Munson)** and **SB 495 (McCortney)** were filed stating that the Legislature, state agency, department, or commission shall not implement any mandate to any political subdivision of this State, unless a specific appropriation is made to fully fund the political subdivision for all costs related to the mandate.

ACOG strongly supports this carryover legislation thus creating a commonsense litmus test for all future legislative activity.

STATUS: This carryover proposed legislation has not been brought to committee.



MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING

ACOG advocates for increased state funding in mental healthcare, hospitals, and staffing to specifically address the homeless issue. This augmentation in mental health funding would not only enhance the well-being of individuals but also prove advantageous for municipalities statewide.

The growing population of unhoused individuals has imposed a strain on municipal resources, both in terms of funding and staffing.

The mental health and homelessness issue has several moving parts. In 2023, **HB 2175** was signed into law to create the Behavior Health Workforce Development Fund – to allow for the expansion of the number of psychiatric residences.

HB 3338 (Roe) has filed the Oklahoma Mental Health Reform Act of 2024. We look forward monitoring this shell bill as it evolves.

STATUS: [Second Reading in House Rules Committee.](#)



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

ACOG supports **SB 1923 (Alvord)** which would modify certain actions for pedestrians, as it pertains to safety. It also adds some language to clarify how a vehicle should pass around a roundabout (central island of a circular intersection).

STATUS: Passed Senate Public Safety Committee.

SPEED LIMITS

ACOG is opposed to **HB 3894 (Ford)** that requires a minimum speed limit of 65 mph on an interstate or turnpike. These minimum speeds are too high and at times may create a dangerous driving environment.

STATUS: Referred to House Rules Committee.



COUNTY IMPROVEMENTS FOR ROADS AND BRIDGES

ACOG supports **SB 1421 (Rogers)** which modifies the apportionment of fees, taxes and penalties collected or received to the County Improvements for Roads and Bridges Act.

STATUS: Referred to Senate Aeronautics & Transportation Committee then to Senate Appropriations Committee.

ROAD USER CHARGE PROGRAM

ACOG opposes **HB 2970 (Gann)** which would repeal the Oklahoma Road User Charge Program.

STATUS: Second reading referred to House Transportation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESTRUCTURING (ODOC)



ODOC MISSION

HB 3252 (Osburn) modifies the statement of needs and mission statement of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC)

STATUS: Passed House Appropriations & Budget Natural Resources Subcommittee.

OK to RELOCATE

SB 1335 (Garvin) creates the OK to Relocate Act which forms the OK to Relocate RLF for ODOC and requires the agency to establish a talent attraction program for the purpose of attracting out-of-state businesses to Oklahoma

STATUS: Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESTRUCTURING (ODOC)



CREATING OKLAHOMA'S MODERN PLAN FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION & EFFECTIVENESS

SB 1447 (Thompson, Kristen) creates the Oklahoma Office of Economic Development, Growth, and Expansion to serve as the state's lead economic development agency with ODOC playing a supporting role.

STATUS: Passed Subcommittee and referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

DROUGHT COMMITTEE REALIGNMENT

HB 3182 (PATZKOWSKY) requires the emergency drought committee to meet at the call of the Secretary of Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry when the Secretary declares that emergency drought conditions exist in the state.

STATUS: Passed House AG Committee.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

HB 3854 (CORNWELL) would set up a fund for small municipalities and their water infrastructure.

STATUS: Passed House Subcommittee.

LEGISLATIVE WATCHLIST








REVENUE & TAXES

- HB 2949 - McCall
- SB 1618 - Garvin
- SB 1680 - Green
- SB 1863 - Stewart
- SB 2037 - Deevers

LOCAL AUTHORITY BILLS

- HB 3296 - Bennett
- HB 3578 - Pae
- SB 1532 - Alvord
- SB 1617 - Thompson (K)
- SB 1652 - Prieto
- SB 1815 - Newhouse
- SB 1845 - Thompson (K)

-  *Support*
-  *Oppose*
-  *Monitor*
-  *Carryover*
-  *Shell Bill*

FIREARM BILLS

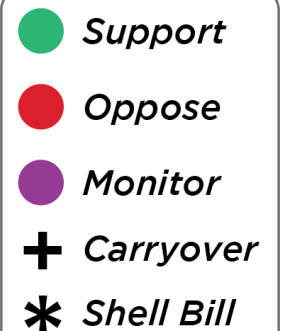
HB 2136⁺ - McDugle
SB 1870 - Standridge
SB 1936 - Kidd

MARIJUANA BILLS

HB 3355 - Marti
SB 1635 - Coleman

MENTAL HEALTH

HB 3338* - Roe
HB 2947* - Bashore
HB 2994* - West (J)



UNFUNDED MANDATES & USER-FRIENDLY REGULATORY REFORM

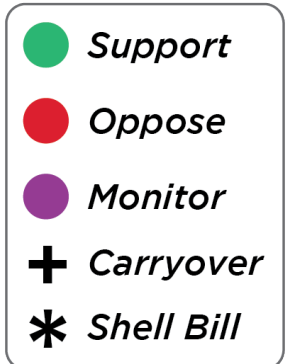


REGULATORY REFORM BILLS

HB 2786⁺ - Munson
SB 495⁺ - McCortney

UNFUNDED MANDATE BILLS

HB 3265 - Humphrey
HB 3754 - Hardin
SB 1316 - Bullard
SB 1801 - Dahm
SB 1854 - Weaver
SB 1928 - Standridge
SB 2026 - Weaver

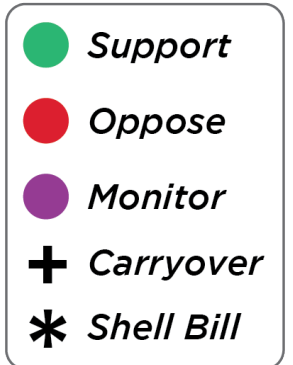


911 & PUBLIC SAFETY BILLS

HB 1924⁺ - Sims
HB 3897 - Ford
SB 966⁺ - Coleman

RURAL FIRE DEFENSE PROGRAM BILLS

HB 2979 - Kane
HB 2991 - West (J)
HB 3192 - Newton
HB 3573 - Pae
SB 1333 - Hall
SB 1524 - Green
SB 1526 - Green
SB 1779 - Bullard
SB 1842 - Thompson (K)



WATER RESOURCES BILLS

HB 2313 - Sims

HB 3049 - Boles

HB 3182 - Patzkowsky

HB 3193 - Newton

HB 3195 - Newton

HB 3854 - Cornwell

SB 1331 - Bullard

SB 1341 - Howard

SB 1406 - Bergstrom

SB 1352 - Bullard

SB 1650 - Paxton

SB 1781 - Boren

 *Support*

 *Oppose*

 *Monitor*

 *Carryover*

 *Shell Bill*

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE








TRANSPORTATION

- HB 2752⁺ - Miller
- HB 2970 - Gann
- HB 3213 - West (K)
- HB 3735 - Dempsey
- HB 3848* - Pittman
- HB 3894 - Ford
- HB 4146 - Turner
- SB 1290 - Kirt
- SB 1421 - Rogers
- SB 1469 - Haste
- SB 1923 - Alvord
- SB 1932 - Standridge

AIR QUALITY BILLS

- SB 1389 - Boren
- SB 1553 - Boren

-  Support
-  Oppose
-  Monitor
-  Carryover
-  Shell Bill

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE



JOB EXPANSION

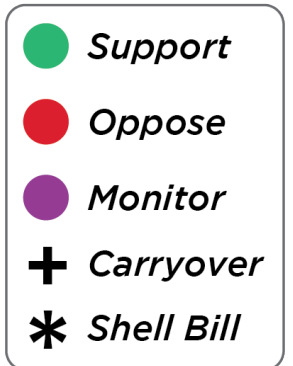
HB 4064 - Wallace
HB 4070 - Wallace
SB 1807 - Garvin

RURAL ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN (REAP) BILLS

HB 2508⁺ - Fugate
SB 2008 - Rader
SB 2033 - Howard

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ODOC)

HB 3252 - Osburn
HB 3424 - Archer
SB 1335 - Garvin
SB 1447 - Thompson (K)



APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

RURAL ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN (REAP)

REAP provides grants to small communities, towns, counties, and other organizations serving populations under 7,000 that have little or no funding capabilities.

There are currently 538 municipalities in Oklahoma under 7,000 in population (90% of all Oklahoma municipalities).

In FY 2024 the REAP allocation was \$30 million, funded over 460 projects across the state and was also used to leverage almost \$50 million in funding for Community & Economic Development projects in rural communities.

FY 2025 Recommendation: Increase REAP funding by **\$14 million**, which by statute will distribute equal REAP allocations of **\$4 million to all 11 Oklahoma Councils of Government (COGs)**. **Fiscal Impact:** **\$14 million** above current allocation of \$30 million.

SB 2033 (Howard), which would have increased REAP funding but also included a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) for loans to REAP eligible communities, was opposed by ACOG and all other COGs due to its unconstitutionality and Sen. Howard has said it will not make it out of committee.



RURAL FIRE DEFENSE PROGRAM

The Rural Fire Defense (RFD) Program supports and equips rural fire departments in protecting lives and property of rural Oklahomans. The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF) contracts through Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils (OARC) for the COGs to employ RFD Coordinators who annually certify approximately 875 fire departments across Oklahoma for state operational funding and assist rural fire departments with training, grant writing, inventory and equipment support.

State funding for the RFD program was increased for FY 2024 per COG to \$100,000, which made a huge impact to the program.

FY 2025 Recommendation: Make the current **\$100,000 per all 11 Oklahoma COGs** a line item in the State budget through the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture and oppose any and all changes that may be proposed to the RFD Program.

Fiscal Impact: Maintain current allocation of \$1,100,00.



SUBSTATE PLANNING DISTRICT PROGRAM

The Substate Planning District Program allows Oklahoma's 11 designated Substate Planning Districts (COGs) to provide planning and technical assistance to local governments. Oklahoma COGs are the primary resource for many local governments to apply for federal and state grants, coordinate efforts to develop capacity to attract business investments and job creation and make the delivery of governmental services more effective.

Substate funding has declined from \$50,000 to its current level of \$13,400 for FY 2024. Maintaining adequate Substate funding is necessary for COGs to continue to provide essential intergovernmental services to local governments in their Districts.

FY 2025 Recommendation: Increase Substate planning funding to **\$50,000 per all 11 Oklahoma COGs** and make it a line-item in the State budget through the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

Fiscal Impact: **\$402,600** above current allocation of \$147,400.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



2024 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments Legislative Power Brunch Report

Rachel Meinke | Public Information Director
rmeinke@acogok.org | 405.234.2264