



ACOG LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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

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

Friday, April 19, 2024 - Deadline for SBs/SJR 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 ISSUES SUPPORTED BY ACOG



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 recommended one-time appropriation of \$16.6M to create 11 separate \$1.36M RLFs that are designed to support their regions. (Appropriation to be determined.)

STATUS: Co-Authored by Senator Hall. Passed Senate Finance Committee and is now waiting to be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee. Legislation talking points plus testimonials from Oklahoma COG Executive Directors on how the RLF would benefit their communities was sent to ACOG region Senate Appropriations Committee members last week. A reminder email will be sent once the legislation has been placed on the committee agenda.

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: SB 1650 passed the Senate General Govt. Committee on Feb. 22 and Representative Boles has been named co-author. The title has been removed with anticipation that Tort Cap limits can be discussed when the bill goes to the House.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER RETIREMENT

SB 1524 (Green) allows 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. First read in House on 3/18/24, after second reading it was referred to the House Banking, Financial Services & Pensions Committee on 3/25/24.

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. Second reading referred to Rules Committee on 3/25/24.

FIGHTING CHANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS

HB 3573 (Pae) 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: Engrossed to Senate and after second reading was referred to Retirement & Insurance Committee then to Appropriations Committee on 3/19/24.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER INSURANCE POOL

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

STATUS: Engrossed to House and after second reading was referred to Judiciary-Civil Committee on 3/25/24.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

SB 1923 (Alvord) modifies 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: Engrossed to House and after second reading was referred to House Transportation Committee on 3/25/24.

COUNTY IMPROVEMENTS FOR ROADS AND BRIDGES

SB 1421 (Rogers) 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. Will need to be voted out of committee and heard on the floor before April 8 or it is dormant.

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, engrossed to Senate. After second reading, it was referred to Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee on 3/19/24.

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

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

STATUS: Passed House, engrossed to Senate. After second reading referred to Senate Finance Committee then to Appropriations Committee on 3/19/24.

ACOG will closely monitor these bills because several of our most important programs are funded through ODOC:

- REAP
- Substate Planning
- State Energy Program (SEP)

ODOC MISSION

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

STATUS: Passed the House and was read on the Senate floor for its first reading on 3/18/24.

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 and Representative Miller announced as House author.

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 Senate, engrossed to House. After second reading, referred to Appropriations and Budget Committee on 3/25/24.

LEGISLATIVE WATCHLIST



REVENUE & TAXES

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

FIREARMS

- SB 1870 - Standridge
- SB 1936 - Kidd

LOCAL AUTHORITY

- SB 1532 - Alvord
- SB 1617 - Thompson (K)
- SB 1652 - Prieto
- SB 1815 - Newhouse
- SB 1845 - Thompson (K)

MARIJUANA

- SB 1635 - Coleman

- Support
- Oppose
- Monitor
- Carryover
- Shell Bill

UNFUNDED MANDATE BILLS






SB 1316 - Bullard

SB 1801 - Dahm

SB 1854 - Weaver

SB 1928 - Standridge

SB 2026 - Weaver

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

RURAL FIRE DEFENSE PROGRAM

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

HB 3182 - Patzkowsky

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*

TRANSPORTATION

HB 3213 - West (K)
HB 3735 - Dempsey
SB 1290 - Kirt
SB 1421 - Rogers
SB 1469 - Haste
SB 1923 - Alvord
SB 1932 - Standridge

AIR QUALITY

SB 1389 - Boren
SB 1553 - Boren

JOB EXPANSION

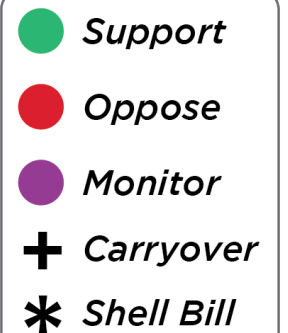
HB 4064 - Wallace
HB 4070 - Wallace
SB 1807 - Garvin

RURAL ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN (REAP)

SB 2008 - Rader
SB 2033 - Howard

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ODOC)

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



LOCAL AUTHORITY

HB 3296 - Bennett

HB 3578 - Pae

MARIJUANA

HB 3355 - Marti

MENTAL HEALTH

HB 3338* - Roe

HB 2947* - Bashore

HB 2994* - West (J)

REGULATORY REFORM

HB 2786⁺ - Munson

SB 495⁺ - McCortney

UNFUNDED MANDATE

HB 3265 - Humphrey

HB 3754 - Hardin

911 & PUBLIC SAFETY

HB 1924⁺ - Sims

HB 3897 - Ford

SB 966⁺ - Coleman

RURAL FIRE DEFENSE PROGRAM

HB 2979 - Kane

- Support
- Oppose
- Monitor
- Carryover
- Shell Bill

WATER RESOURCES






- HB 2313 - Sims
- HB 3049 - Boles
- HB 3193 - Newton
- HB 3195 - Newton

TRANSPORTATION

- HB 2752⁺ - Miller
- HB 2970 - Gann
- HB 3848* - Pittman
- HB 3894 - Ford
- HB 4146 - Turner

RURAL ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN (REAP)

- HB 2508⁺ - Fugate

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

APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS



SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION & JOBS ACT

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

The Oklahoma Small Business Expansion and Jobs Act will create 11 separate revolving loan funds that are designed to support their regions. This RLF Program will target small businesses of 50 employees or less to provide low-interest loans and other financial assistance. 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.

FY 2025 Funding Recommendation: One-time funding of \$16.6 million to fund a \$1.36 million Revolving Loan Fund at each COG statewide.

Fiscal Impact: A one-time \$16.6 million allocation for statewide Revolving Loan Fund.

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.

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.

THANK YOU.
Questions or Comments?

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