



# OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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## Ohio Transportation Budget

Ohio Chamber of Commerce Director of Travel and Tourism Policy Matt MacLaren provided testimony on HB 54, the Ohio transportation budget. In his testimony, MacLaren expressed the Ohio Chamber's support for the bill, which will invest nearly \$10 billion over the next two years to maintain and improve Ohio's transportation infrastructure. His testimony also showed Ohio Chamber support for funding for public transit, airports, the "Step 2" passenger rail study, and the Mobility Ohio initiative.

## State Controlling Board Approves Chamber-Led JobsOhio Extension

After multiple delays over the past year, the State Controlling Board last Wednesday approved an extension of JobsOhio's liquor franchise by 15 years. This extension, originally conceived by the Ohio Chamber as an amendment in the last state operating budget, equips JobsOhio with increased capacity to compete for more economic opportunities, longer-term agreements, and more aggressive incentives. The Ohio Chamber heavily advocated for this cause over the last several months, culminating in an editorial leading up to the vote co-authored by the Chamber and the Ohio Business Roundtable which appeared in several statewide newspapers. Both Chamber President and CEO Steve Stivers and SVP of Government Affairs Rick Carfagna engaged directly with Governor DeWine and his team, House and Senate leadership, State Controlling Board members, and JobsOhio to get this critical effort across the finish line.



Ohio's Economic  
Development Corporation

As the Chamber has stressed, extending JobsOhio sends a strong signal to the marketplace that Ohio supports economic development and will continue to do so for decades more under this proven model. Companies that might otherwise be apprehensive about entering into agreements that would outlive JobsOhio's ownership of the liquor franchise now have more long-term assurances, and the state will continue to significantly profit from annual deferred payments into the general revenue fund.

The Ohio Chamber was proud to lead the way to bring this deal to fruition and looks forward to the continued prosperity and opportunities generated by JobsOhio's efforts.

## **ODOT US23 Corridor Action Plan**

The Ohio Department of Transportation recently released their Route 23 Connect Preliminary Feasibility Study and Corridor Action Plan, which identifies improvements on US 23 between Worthington and Waldo. This important stretch of highway is the main connector between Northwest and Central Ohio, and it currently includes 39 traffic signals in 24 miles and is already 30% overcapacity. The study and action plan provide a roadmap to changes that, once implemented, will reduce fatal crashes, eliminate at least 32 stop lights, and improve travel times by 35 minutes.