

Ohio Senate unanimously approves more driver training, money for highways

By Erin Glynn
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Ohio senators approved [\\$11.5 billion for the state's highways](#), airports and rail travel on Wednesday.

The transportation budget bill passed unanimously in the Ohio Senate. The House sent it to Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine with an 87-3 vote later in the day.

"This critical investment not only creates hundreds of good paying jobs, it prioritizes safety on our roads and bridges, provides the resources to modernize and maintain our transportation systems. We're ensuring a safer, stronger, and a more prosperous future for every community across the state," Sen. Nickie Antonio, D-Lakewood, said on the Senate floor.

Senators removed a few provisions from the House version of the budget bill, including a fund for airport improvements and a measure to appoint four members from Ohio to the [Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission](#), a group of state leaders across the region working on improvements to train travel.

House lawmakers added a provision in the budget banning Bureau of Motor Vehicle employees from offering voter registration to anyone who is not eligible to vote. Senators changed that provision to require residents to present proof of their U.S. citizenship or have previously presented proof to the BMV before they can be offered voter registration.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine [called on the legislature](#) to require driver's training for everyone getting a license for the first time, not just those under 18.

The House version of the budget included a requirement that people getting a limited term driver's license have 50 hours of driving experience and take in-person driver's training. The Senate Transportation Committee kept the requirement but added an exemption for adults with an examination waiver for situations like serving in the military or the Peace Corps.

The House approved the transportation budget in February, but will need to vote again given the changes the Senate made. DeWine must sign a transportation budget bill by the end of the month.