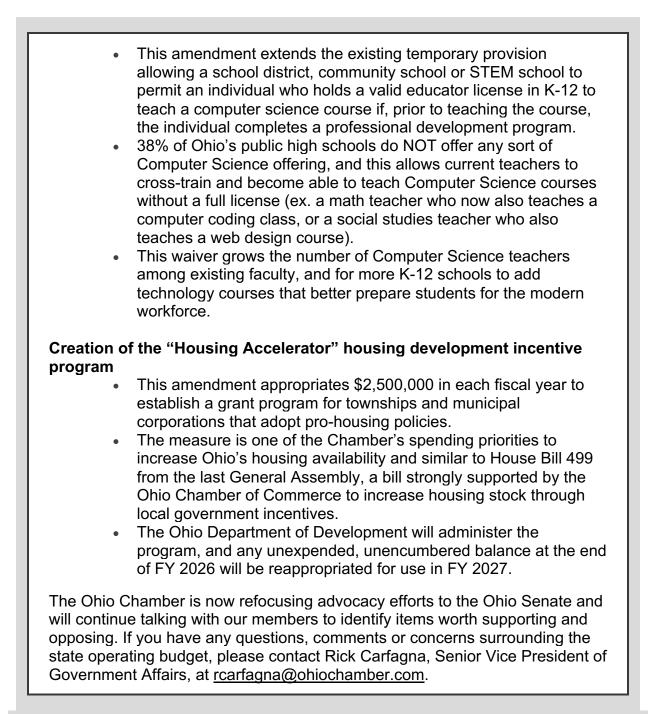


By a 60-39 vote largely along partisan lines, the Ohio House Finance Committee adopted its version of the two-year state operating budget (House Bill 96) last Wednesday. The handful of the Ohio Chamber's (OCC) spending priorities and policy asks previously incorporated were preserved, with a few additional Chamber-requested measures. The latest round of Chamberrequested measures rolled into the budget included:

An additional \$100 million invested in child care access

- The House made a substantial investment in child care affordability by committing \$100 million more in TANF block grant funds towards continuation of the Governor's Child Care Choice Voucher Program.
- This voucher program, created last year by Governor DeWine, makes child care more affordable for working families by creating additional eligibility for publicly-funded child care of up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- Although the House budget appropriates \$25 million less than the Governor's proposal, the total \$200 million investment in this program remains substantial and an important validation of the Governor's effort and of the business community's advocacy.

Permanent extension of the Computer Science teacher licensure waiver



HB 186 Legislative Update

Last week, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce submitted proponent testimony on House Bill 186, which seeks to address unvoted increases in property taxes that have been putting a strain on Ohioans. Recent years have shown the hardship on Ohioans as their property tax bills have significantly increased, presenting a growing financial challenge for many residents. A study conducted by the Ohio Chamber Research Foundation and Ernst Young found that property taxes in the peer locations in Ohio were 72% higher than those of the peer locations analyzed across the county. High property taxes not only negatively impact current residents of Ohio, but they also act as a disincentive for businesses looking to relocate to our state.

Two burdensome aspects of Ohio's property tax system include the state's 20mill floor and the exemptions from House Bill 920's tax reduction factors, which have resulted in unvoted increases in property taxes. Of Ohio's 611 school districts, almost 80% are at or near the 20-mill floor, meaning these districts are no longer subject to HB 920's protections, causing property taxes to rise dramatically as property values increase.

House Bill 186 provides a much-needed remedy to this issue by ensuring that the revenue growth of a school district won't exceed inflationary growth over the previous three years. Limiting the growth in revenue of a school district from the 20-mil floor to the rate of inflation presents a needed long-term solution to curb unvoted property tax growth and provide relief to Ohioans. This bill does not eliminate school districts' ability to seek additional funding; instead, it ensures that any revenue increase above inflation is subject to voter approval.