



ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS
LEGISLATIVE POWER
BRUNCH 2023



- 911 Dispatchers were recognized as First Responders (HB 3278)
- Rural Fire Defense Program Increase and Inclusion of ACOG
- Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) Grant Program Increase

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



- Preserve and Protect Local Government Authority and Autonomy
- Protect Our Communities from Unfunded Mandates and Promote User Friendly Regulatory Reform
- Maintain and Enhance Funding for Existing Programs and New Projects that Improve the Quality of Life



**PRESERVE & PROTECT
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AUTHORITY &
AUTONOMY**

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY & AUTONOMY



- **Firearms:** Along with our partners: Oklahoma Municipal League (OML) and the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber (GOKCC), ACOG supports the prohibition of carrying a firearm into any business that has a no guns sign, the carrying of such weapons into large public events or parks when a municipality has passed an ordinance, signage has been posted and all applicable state laws have been observed.
- **Oklahoma Turnpike Authority (OTA):** ACOG supports a more collaborative and transparent coordination process among local, regional and state transportation agencies to ensure that communities have more input on the planning and construction of future projects that will impact them.
- **Open Meeting Act:** Along with OML, ACOG supports allowing members of a public body to participate in public meetings via videoconferencing or teleconferencing if they only participate electronically in less than half of the regularly scheduled meetings of the public body unless there is a declared state of emergency.

- **Tax Relief:** As with last year, there are numerous bills that have been filed that pertain to Grocery Sales Tax Exemptions or Inflation Relief. While ACOG, in principle, 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 movement to eliminate the municipal sales tax on groceries, as well.

Please note that cities in Oklahoma are predominately dependent on sales tax revenue for operations. Likewise, Oklahoma is the only state in the US that does not allow municipalities access to ad valorem tax revenues, which places our cities at a distinctive economic disadvantage in comparison to municipalities in other states. Therefore, ACOG is requesting that the Legislature take a comprehensive approach to tax reform and relief by addressing all potential revenue components, including the sales and ad valorem tax structure for the state.



- **Marijuana:** The state-wide voter approval of Medical Marijuana almost five years ago has generated a plethora of legislation over the past few sessions to resolve countless issues that were not anticipated or preconceived. A variety of Marijuana bills have also been filed for this session. The ACOG guiding principle of local control is our key focus as we assess the proposed legislation.

Our member governments are keenly aware of the likely passage of the Recreational Marijuana Proposition scheduled for a vote on March 7, 2023. ACOG urges that a more proactive and comprehensive approach be taken by the Legislature to develop a workable strategy for the opening of recreational marijuana establishments and facilities that is respectful of municipal and county regulations and enforcement.



LEGISLATION WATCHLIST

FIREARM BILLS

- HB 1001 - Olsen
- HB 1021 - Olsen
- HB 1782 - Williams
- HB 2136 - McDugle
- HB 2645 - Steagall
- SB 80 - Bergstrom
- SB 911 - Jett
- SB 1024 - Dahm
- SB 1049 - Dahm

OTA BILLS

- HB 2262 - Sterling
- HB 2264 - Sterling
- HB 2606 - Humphrey
- HB 2728 - Menz
- SB 199 - Standridge
- SB 419 - Boren
- SB 970 - Jett
- SB 1079 - Jett





LEGISLATION WATCHLIST

OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY BILLS

- HB 1008 - McCall
- HB 2089 - Echols
- HB 2135 - Lepak
- HB 2786 - Munson
- SB 46 - Bergstrom
- SB 201 - Burns
- SB 246 - Hicks

TAX RELIEF BILLS


- HB 1272* - McCall
- HB 1273* - McCall
- HB 1274* - McCall
- HB 1275* - McCall
- HB 1276* - McCall
- HB 1444 - Provenzano
- HB 1955 - McCall
- HB 2086 - Echols
- HB 2234 - Ford
- HB 2447 - May

MARIJUANA BILLS

- HB 1014 - Olsen
- HB 2797 - Stinson
- SB 608 - Rader
- SB 758 - Rosino

OPEN MEETING ACT BILLS

- HB 2108 - Pae
- HB 2399 - Kannady
- SB 1055 - Kidd

-  Support
-  Oppose
-  Monitor
- *Shell Bill



**PROTECT OUR
COMMUNITIES**
from UNFUNDED MANDATES

**and PROMOTE USER FRIENDLY
REGULATORY REFORM**

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS

UNFUNDED MANDATES & USER-FRIENDLY REGULATORY REFORM



- **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. This year a bill has been filed (SB 495) 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 legislation thus creating a commonsense litmus test for all future legislative activity.

UNFUNDED MANDATES & USER-FRIENDLY REGULATORY REFORM



LEGISLATION WATCHLIST

REGULATORY REFORM BILLS

HB 1891 - Cantrell

SB 241 - Kirt

SB 495 - McCortney

SB 689 - Garvin

SB 766 - Stewart

SB 776 - Stewart





**MAINTAIN and ENHANCE
FUNDING for EXISTING
PROGRAMS**

**and PROJECTS THAT IMPROVE
the QUALITY OF LIFE**

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE



- **911 & PUBLIC SAFETY:** 911 is funded by Customer paid / Carrier collected Telephone Service Remittance Fees from Landline, Wireless, Pre-paid Wireless and VoIP and submitted to the Governing Bodies directly (Landline Fees) or to the Oklahoma Tax Commission (Wireless, Pre-paid Wireless and VoIP.)

ACOG supports legislation that addresses the Collapse of Landline 911 Fee Revenue and NexGen 911. Recognizing the loss of Landline fee due to Service Providers conversion of Telephone Switches to VoIP and funding of NexGen 911 for the State are priority issues for ACOG. Protecting the current Landline Remittance fee structure and revenue to the less populated rural 911 centers are key factors.

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE



- **WATER RESOURCES:** A variety of water-related bills have been introduced for the next session, however, as emphasized in our ACOG Vision Forward Video there needs to be greater focus on long-term drought relief. Even though ACOG does support some of the new bills, the proposed legislation does not effectively address this important issue. The availability of water becomes progressively more pronounced with each succeeding drought cycle and more challenging to resolve.

ACOG supports a more aggressive water resource planning effort both regionally and state-wide which will require extensive coordination with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and increased funding from the Legislature.

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE



LEGISLATION WATCHLIST

911 & PUBLIC SAFETY BILLS

HB 1590 - Grego
HB 1924 - Sims
HB 1897 - Cantrell
HB 1866* - Kerbs
SB 492 - Paxton
SB 718 - Murdock

WATER RESOURCES BILLS

HB 1711 - Marti
HB 1940 - McCall
HB 1943 - McCall
HB 1982 - Newton
HB 2053 - Hardin
HB 2313 - Hilbert
SB 165 - Dahm
SB 659 - Murdock
SB 846 - Dahm
SB 851 - Bullard
SB 874 - Jett

 Support
 Oppose
 Monitor
*Shell Bill

SEEK OUT PROGRAM FUNDING & IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE



LEGISLATION WATCHLIST

AIR QUALITY BILLS

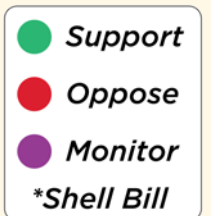
HB 1330 - Strom
HB 1892 - Cantrell
HB 2099 - Bennett
HB 2244* - Dobrinski
HB 2245* - Dobrinski
SB 151 - Hicks
SB 306 - Hicks
SB 502 - Hall
SB 504 - Boren

SAFETY BILLS

HB 1022 - Olsen
HB 2684 - Hays
HB 2752 - Miller
SB 106 - Hicks
SB 164 - Hicks
SB 306 - Hicks
SB 681 - Pederson

REAP PROGRAM BILLS

HB 2508 - Fugate





PRIMARY APROPRIATIONS OBJECTIVES

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA GOVERNMENTS

PRIMARY APPROPRIATIONS OBJECTIVES



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).

REAP grants can be used to fund capital improvements for infrastructure and public facilities, road and street construction and equipment for health and public safety.

For FY 2023 the REAP allocation was \$30 million and funded over 460 projects across the state.

FY 2024 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.

PRIMARY APPROPRIATIONS OBJECTIVES



RURAL FIRE DEFENSE PROGRAM

The Rural Fire Defense 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 Rural Fire Defense 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 Rural Fire Defense program has declined from about **\$75,000 per COG** to **\$72,727 in FY 2023**. Program costs now average over \$100,000 per year and the COGs have absorbed this deficit. Increasing state funding to reduce the funding gap is essential to ensure public safety and affordable insurance rates in rural Oklahoma.

FY 2024 Recommendation: Increase Rural Fire Defense Coordinator Contracts to **\$100,000 per all 11 Oklahoma COGs** and make it a line item in the State budget through the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture.

Fiscal Impact: **\$300,000 above** current allocation of \$800,000.

PRIMARY APPROPRIATIONS OBJECTIVES



RURAL FIRE DEFENSE - WET HYDRANT PROGRAM

The Rural Fire Defense Wet Hydrant Program will help the COGs to meet the intent of the Rural Fire Defense Program by lowering the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating which has an impact on homeowners' insurance rates.

Installation of these wet hydrants in certain areas will also help with water distribution for wild land fires and assist the rural fire taskforce.

This program is anticipated to become an annual program and will require a proof of hydrant installation;

FY 2024 Recommendation: \$250,000 for the pilot program to purchase distribution hydrants that flow a minimum of 250 gallons per minute.

Fiscal Impact: \$250,000 to purchase 70-80 hydrants statewide.

PRIMARY APPROPRIATIONS OBJECTIVES



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 2023. Maintaining adequate Substate funding is necessary for COGs to continue to provide essential intergovernmental services to local governments in their Districts.

FY 2024 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.



**Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
2023 Legislative Power Brunch**

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