

# ACOG LEGISLATIVE REPORT

## MARCH 2025

Rachel Meinke  
Public Information Director

O: 405.234.2264  
[rmeinke@acogok.org](mailto:rmeinke@acogok.org)

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- Deadline for Third Reading of Bills and Joint Resolutions from chamber of origin - Thursday, March 27, 2025
- Deadline for SBs/SJR out of Policy Committees and Appropriation Subcommittees - Thursday, April 10, 2025
- Deadline for SBs/SJR out of Oversight, Admin Rules, Appropriations and Rules Committees - Thursday, April 24, 2025
- Deadline for Third Reading of Bills and Joint Resolutions from opposite chamber - Thursday, May 8, 2025
- Potential session and Sine Die Adjournment - Friday, May 30, 2025

# ACTIVE KEY LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS



ACOG **supports SB 650 (Paxton)** which proposes a shift in public policy on Sanitary Sewer Operation by rewarding municipalities that are meeting certain maintenance and operational standards with liability protection from nuisance-based tort claims.

## **BENEFITS:**

- **Improved Water Quality:** Ensures better water quality for residents.
- **Resource Efficiency:** More efficient use of tax dollars.
- **Legal Protections:**
  - Offers legal protections against nuisance litigation for cities and towns that comply with sanitary sewer standards.
  - Encourages improvements in sanitary sewer systems and water quality protecting funding from nuisance liability exposure
  - Addresses Oklahoma Governmental Tort Claims Act (OGTCA) limits and addresses recent Court of Appeals decisions that impact exemptions under the OGTCA
- **Support for Cities and Towns:** Assists in upgrading and maintaining aging infrastructure, especially for towns with limited resources.

**STATUS: First reading in House on March 26.**

ACOG **supports HB 1374 (Boles)** which allows private industry to produce electricity only for itself to avoid regulation as a public utility. The measure could open the door for billions of dollars in new economic development across Oklahoma. The bill is particularly relevant as the demand for energy rises due to growing investments in manufacturing and AI data centers in the Midwest and Southeast.

**STATUS: Passed House unanimously, onto Senate.**

ACOG **supports SB 93 (Prieto)** which **provides authority, with limitations, for a non-utility owned microgrid to install wires across or along a public right of way.** This is presumably designed to allow a microgrid to serve more than one private property, prohibiting any party other than a utility from crossing a public right of way with a wire is how the law protects the utility exclusive franchise.

**STATUS: Placed on Senate floor agenda.**

ACOG **supports SB 352 (Gollihare)** which **gives the power of eminent domain to a gas distribution utility in addition to electric utilities.** This would mean natural gas companies could install pipes over the objection of a private landowner. **There may be situations where this would make it easier for a microgrid to develop a project in Oklahoma.**

**STATUS: First reading in House on March 12.**

## RURAL FIREFIGHTER REQUIREMENT TO SUBMIT REPORTS ONLINE

**HB 1052 (Kelley)** requires all fire chiefs of municipal fire departments, fire protection districts, and volunteer fire departments to utilize the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) to submit incident reports. The measure also requires fire-related burn injuries and death reports to be submitted within 48 hours of the incident. ACOG **opposes** this bill because it is impractical as these volunteers must return to their full-time jobs after responding to emergencies. Additionally, many rural fire chiefs rely solely on their cell phones for administrative tasks, making electronic reporting difficult. Currently, these reports are completed annually on paper, a system that aligns with the needs of rural fire departments.

**STATUS: First reading in Senate on March 11.**

## CHANGES TO LEGISLATIVE MUNICIPAL ZONING REGULATIONS & RESTRICTIONS

ACOG **opposes** SB 647 (Frix) which would lessen the authority of a municipality's zoning authority. **This filed bill would impose detailed procedural requirements for zoning and land use decisions, which would limit a municipality's flexibility to make decisions based on local priorities and contextual needs.** It also de-emphasizes the role of comprehensive plans which could hinder cities and towns from aligning with their visions for growth.

**STATUS: First reading in House on March 26.**

## PROHIBITING MUNICIPALITIES FROM MAINTAINING CERTAIN SERVICES

ACOG **opposes SB 484 (Standridge)** due to the restrictive and inequitable burdens it places on municipalities with populations under 300,000. The bill imposes zoning limitations and notice requirements that are uniquely stringent for these communities, limiting their ability to address homelessness locally and effectively.

By prohibiting new homeless shelters within 3,000 feet of schools, parks, libraries, and similar facilities, the bill effectively eliminates viable locations for such services in many communities. This legislation does not provide meaningful solutions or resources to address homelessness—it merely restricts where services can be offered.

It risks pushing the burden onto larger cities like Oklahoma City and Tulsa, creating a patchwork system that is neither efficient nor fair.

ACOG believes local governments should retain the flexibility to implement programs and site services that best meet the needs of their residents.

**STATUS: First reading in House on March 26.**



## AMENDING NO TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

ACOG **supports** the amendatory language in **HB 2263 (Miller)** which clarifies that it is **unlawful for any driver to send, read, or compose a text message while driving** and increases the fees for fines and costs to law enforcement.

**STATUS: First reading in Senate on March 18.**

## COUNTY IMPROVEMENTS FOR ROADS AND BRIDGES

ACOG **supports** **SB 258 (Haste)** which modifies the apportionment of fees, taxes and penalties collected or received to the **County Improvements for Roads and Bridges (CIRB) Act**.

**STATUS: First reading in House on March 26.**

## ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON ISSUING GROUNDWATER PERMITS

ACOG **opposes SB 133 (Burns)** that would place a moratorium on groundwater permits since the studies conducted by the Oklahoma Water Resources Board are a lengthy process and **this filed bill does not set up a realistic timeline for a study to be conducted, therefore leaving property owners and municipalities in limbo.**

**STATUS: Referred to House on March 26.**

## ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON LAND APPLICATION OF BIOSOLIDS

ACOG **opposes SB 3 (Green)** because this **filed bill does not define what biosolids or sludge consists of, it bans multiple substances for land application and does not give options to municipalities on disposal.**

**STATUS: Referred to House on March 26.**

# ACTIVE LEGISLATIVE WATCHLIST



## FIREARMS

SB 84 - Sacchieri

## OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY

SB 347 - Hicks

SB 400 - Coleman

SB 404 - Stewart

SB 433 - Weaver

SB 647 - Paxton

SB 694 - Alvord

## ODOC EFFICIENCY

SB 987 - Thompson

## TAXES

HB 1024 - Bashore

SB 628 - Daniels

 *Support*

 *Oppose*

 *Monitor*

 *Shell Bill*

## OPEN RECORDS

HB 1409 - Crosswhite-Hader

## RURAL FIRE

HB 1098 - Hardin

## OTHER REGULATORY REFORM

HB 1817 - Newton

HB 2162 - Dobrinski

SB 473 - Rader

SB 1008 - Murdock

## 911 & PUBLIC SAFETY

SB 405 - Alvord

SB 1067 - Rosino

 *Support*

 *Oppose*

 *Monitor*

 *Shell Bill*

## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- HB 2019 - Pae
- SB 249 - K. Thompson
- SB 287 - Pugh
- SB 820 - Boren

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & FUNDING

- HB 2897 - Townley

## WATER RESOURCES

- HB 1807 - Newton
- SB 92 - Bullard
- SB 265 - Murdock

- Support
- Oppose
- Monitor
- Shell Bill

# DORMANT LEGISLATION



## TAXES

- HB 1519 - Banning
- HB 2229 - Munson
- SB 119 - Green
- SB 241 - Thompson
- SB 239 - Wingard
- SB 1123 - Standridge
- SJR 12 - Deevers

## FIREARMS

- HB 1358 - Olsen
- HB 2822 - Steagall

## 911 & PUBLIC SAFETY

- HB 2710 - Ford

## OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY

- HB 1050 - Dollens
- HB 1051 - Dollens
- HB 1069 - Gann
- HB 1152 - Banning
- SB 467 - Alvord
- SB 468 - Alvord
- SB 651 - Stanley

- Support
- Oppose
- Monitor
- Shell Bill



## OPEN RECORDS

- SB 622 - Howard
- SB 1097 - Standridge

## BIOSOLIDS & OTHER SUBSTANCES

- HB 1726 - Shaw
- SB 268 - Jett
- SB 2710 - Rader

## ENERGY DIVERSIFICATION

- SB 119 - Green
- SB 241 - Thompson

## 911 & PUBLIC SAFETY

- HB 1907 - Alonso-Sandoval
- SB 206 - Woods

## OTHER REGULATORY REFORM

- HJR 1003 - Jenkins
- HB 1106 - Manger
- HB 1156 - Cornwell
- HB 1450 - Shaw
- HB 1451 - Shaw
- HB 1452 - Shaw
- HB 1813 - Newton
- SB 259 - Howard
- SB 613 - Boren
- SB 914 - Howard

## RURAL FIRE

- SB 708 - Hines

- Support
- Oppose
- Monitor
- Shell Bill

## 911 & PUBLIC SAFETY

SB 58 - Weaver

## RURAL FIRE

HB 1078 - Smith

HB 1425 - Smith

HB 1426 - Smith

HB 1631 - Sneed

SB 432 - Frix

## MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

HB 1637 - Sneed

HB 2230 - Munson

SB 35 - Hicks

SB 55 - Nice

## COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HB 1345 - Eaves

HB 2236 - Munson

SB 151 - Mann

SB 923 - Nice

SB 938 - Kirt

 *Support*

 *Oppose*

 *Monitor*





 *Shell Bill*

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & FUNDING

- SB 67 - Frix
- SB 73 - Woods
- SB 117 - Pederson
- SB 126 - Woods
- SB 173 - Nice
- SB 260 - Mann
- SB 493 - Standridge

## WATER RESOURCES

- HB 1544 - Patzkowsky
- SB 196 - Green

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

# APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS



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.

In FY 2025 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 2026 Recommendation:** Increase REAP funding by **\$6 million**, which by statute will distribute equal REAP allocations of **\$3.27 million to all 11 Oklahoma Councils of Government (COGs)**. **Fiscal Impact:** **\$6 million** above the current allocation of \$30 million.

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 in FY 2025 per COG was \$100,000, which made a huge impact to the program.

**FY 2026 Recommendation:** Increase the current **\$100,000 to \$125,000 per all 11 Oklahoma COGs** and make it a line item in the State budget through the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry and oppose any and all changes that may be proposed to the Rural Fire Defense Program.

**Fiscal Impact:** An increase of \$275,000 above current allocation of \$1,100,000.

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 \$27,272.72 for FY 2025. Maintaining adequate Substate funding is necessary for COGs to continue to provide essential intergovernmental services to local governments in their Districts.

**FY 2026 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:** **\$250,000** above current allocation of \$300,000.



# QUESTIONS?

Rachel Meinke

Public Information Director

O: 405.234.2264

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[acogok.org](http://acogok.org)

ASSOCIATION OF  
CENTRAL OKLAHOMA  
GOVERNMENTS

