



Ohio Soybean Association Policy Update January 2025

National Policy Updates

Corporate Transparency Act - A federal appeals court has reversed itself and reinstated an injunction halting enforcement of the ownership reporting requirement in the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA), giving relief to thousands of farmers who faced an imminent filing deadline. That means businesses that had been faced with a Jan. 13 deadline to file Beneficial Ownership Information with the Treasury Department will now have to await the outcome of the case in the 5th Circuit to determine the constitutionality of the CTA. OSA will continue to send updates as this case progresses.



End-of-Year Funding Bill - Before concluding their work for the year, Congress passed a stopgap spending bill that includes \$21 billion in ag disaster assistance, \$10 billion in market relief for farmers, and a one-year extension of the 2018 farm bill. Dropped from the bill was a debt limit increase that President-elect Donald Trump had demanded. The votes in the House and Senate followed three days of internal battling among Republicans after members of the incoming Trump Administration voiced criticism of an earlier version of the bill that included a series of smaller bills. The measure approved will keep the government funded through March 14. OSA President Rusty Goebel sent a letter to Ohio congressional members urging for support of an economic assistance package for farmers as well as a farm bill extension. While the addition of disaster assistance and market relief is a success, OSA continues to urge Congress that an updated farm bill is needed to relieve some market stress for farmers.

Logistics and Supply Chain - Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act before adjourning in December. The 2024 WRDA is a bipartisan bill that includes an updated cost-share ratio to address the current backlog of authorized Inland Waterway Trust Fund projects—a top priority for U.S. soybean farmers. The Ohio Soybean Association had promoted passage of the bill throughout 2024, including sending a [letter](#) to members of Congress outlining priorities for Ohio soybean farmers.



Ohio Policy Updates

State Policy Priorities – OSA’s Board of Directors met in December. During this meeting, the board approved OSA’s 2025 State Policy Priorities. Some highlights from these priorities include promotion of renewable fuel production and the bioeconomy, smart growth policies, and state budget priorities such as H2Ohio, transportation and infrastructure investments, and efficient government frameworks. OSA will be releasing the full list of policy priorities this month.

2024 Lame Duck – OSA saw some key legislation passed during the final meeting day of the 2024 GA. This legislation consisted of:

- **SB54** – Included in this bill was language to create the **Ohio River Commission** and the **Ohio Ireland Trade Commission** as well as language to support **soil and water conservation districts**.
 - *Ohio River Commission* - The goal of this commission is to promote economic growth by enhancing marine cargo terminal operations. The Ohio River Commission would also prioritize initiatives outlined in the Ohio Department of Transportation’s Ohio Maritime Strategy and leverage state and federal resources to support infrastructure improvements. This is beneficial to Ohio soybean farmers as soybeans are transported on the Ohio River in bulk and containers. Sound infrastructure is vital for the success of the agriculture industry.
 - *Ohio Ireland Trade Commission* – This commission would study matters consisting of bilateral trade and investment, policy issues of mutual interest, business and academic exchanges, mutual economic support and mutual investment in infrastructure. Improvements in this area and relationships developed by the commission could allow an opportunity for increased trade of soy products to Ireland.
 - *Soil and Water Conservation Districts* - This language allocates \$10 million in aid to farmers in the D3 and D4 designated drought areas who do not qualify for certain federal programs through USDA, or the funds were not enough to cover the cost of damages by the drought. Farmers making a gross income over \$900,000 would not be eligible. However, this is not expected to provide specific assistance for row crops.
- HB 503, a bill which prohibits the importation and hunting of **feral swine** in the state and ends the practice of garbage feeding, was passed and sent to the Governor to be signed into law. This bill also included language to revise three definitions in the Agricultural Commodity Handlers Law by defining “storage”, “grain bank”, and “regular price bid”.
- HB 238, an omnibus regulatory reform bill that includes changes to the current process for certifying **grain testers** at elevators, also passed through the Senate



and was sent to the Governor to be signed into law. The legislation would end the need for grain testers to be certified by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and instead put in place industry-led training requirements. OSA advocated for a clarification in the language allowing for ODA to continue issuing a grain tester identification number to individuals who have completed the training. OSA also advocated to include third-party service providers to ensure they also complete training needed for quality assurance. Both points were adopted into the bill as amendments in the Senate and are now part of the law.

- HB 324, a bill to temporarily authorize a nonrefundable tax credit for the retail sale of **high-ethanol blend** motor fuel, did not receive a vote in Senate committee. OSA plans to watch the progression of this bill if it is reintroduced in the next GA.
- A bill to clarify the law around the use of the **agricultural sales tax exemption** for ATVs, UTVs, compact tractors and trailers did not get passed out of Senate committee. OSA plans to revisit this issue upon reintroduction in the next GA.

Ag-Link Program – The Ohio Treasurer’s Office has announced it is offering an enhanced Ag-LINK application window for counties most affected by drought conditions as farmers plan for the upcoming growing season. The Ag-LINK program allows farmers, agribusinesses and co-ops to receive an interest rate reduction on new or existing operating loans, helping finance upfront costs for expenses such as feed, seed, fertilizer, fuel and equipment. Starting in January, the enhanced loan conditions will let qualified farmers benefit from the following:

- An increased loan cap of up to \$750,000;
- An enhanced interest rate reduction; and
- An extended loan period of up to two years.

The standard Ag-LINK program will be available for farmers in counties not designated as eligible for the enhanced window. Information on the standard loan caps and interest rate reductions will be available in the coming weeks as well, according to the treasurer’s office. More details on the Ag-LINK program and how to start are available [HERE](#). OSA was an advocate on this issue and worked with the Ohio Treasurer of State (TOS) on the enhancements included in this program.

Taxes – The [Joint Committee on Property Tax Review and Reform](#) is expected to release its final report soon. The committee met throughout 2024 to review potential policies that could provide property tax relief to Ohioans. Farmland property taxes were considered, but not a major focus of the committee’s work. OSA will be reviewing the report to see what changes might be recommended that would impact farmland property taxes.