



2025

REPORT TO MEMBERS



OMEA officials met with Sen. Bernie Moreno (R-Ohio) during the 2025 APPA Legislative Rally.

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LETTER TO MEMBERS

Looking back on 2025, change came to both the electric industry as a whole and to the policymaking arena.

Despite these challenges, the Ohio Municipal Electric Association (OMEA) remained focused on advocating for positive policy changes with state and federal lawmakers and on providing the guidance and navigation to help Ohio's public power communities succeed. By engaging closely with our Members across Ohio, we effectively addressed challenges and pursued opportunities to advance the interests of public power. In every effort, the OMEA remained true to its mission of protecting the independence and constitutional rights of Ohio's municipal electric systems.

The OMEA's strongest asset remains its Members. The OMEA membership once again had the largest state delegation at the American Public Power Association (APPA) Legislative Rally, an annual event to take public power's message to Capitol Hill. Throughout the year, Members remained active participants with partner organizations, hosted tours and meetings with policymakers, and engaged with state and federal lawmakers on legislation that impacts Ohio's municipal electric communities. Working in partnership with its Members, OMEA was successful in its advocacy efforts on behalf of public power in 2025.

At the state level, the Ohio legislature introduced and enacted several bills that impact public power. The OMEA's primary focus at the Ohio Statehouse remained focused on protecting the local share of the kilowatt-hour tax. We are pleased to report that no detrimental legislative changes were adopted. In addition, protection of Home Rule and securing fair treatment in policy debates are always top priorities. Significant legislative deliberations included the Fiscal Year 2026-27 State Budget Bill and a major update to the state's energy policy.



▲ OMEA Board of Directors Member and Cuyahoga Falls Mayor Don Walters (left) and Rod Troxell, Cuyahoga Falls Electric Superintendent, met with Rep. Emilia Sykes (D-13) during the APPA Legislative Rally.

LETTER TO MEMBERS (CONT.)

Through continuous advocacy for public power during negotiations, the OMEA successfully secured favorable amendments in both bills. The OMEA was also active in testifying on House Bill (HB) 92, an anti-municipal bill that sought to change how unpaid utility debts are collected. It closely monitored and advocated for public power during discussions of HB 227, an underground damage-prevention bill, and several submetering bills.

At the federal level, a new political landscape emerged in Washington, D.C. President Trump began his second term by reevaluating and partially reversing numerous previously enacted policies. In Congress, Republicans held slim majorities, making the adoption of significant policy changes difficult. However, debate over energy policy continued as resource adequacy and other major issues pose long-term challenges to the broader electric industry. On the tax front, OMEA actively advocated in support of preserving tax-exempt financing throughout the debate of the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act." The OMEA also continued efforts to

address sequestration of Build America Bonds (BABs) and New Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (New CREBs), push for clarity on federal grant awards, and promote balanced grid reliability policies that include provisions beneficial for public power.

Successful legislative efforts and advocacy work are not always visible or result in laws being enacted. The OMEA successfully opposed numerous state and federal bills that posed risks to public power.

As we strive to secure a strong future for municipal electric systems across Ohio, we are thankful for the valuable support and participation of our Members. OMEA's strength lies in its Members, and their engagement is more important than ever. The OMEA is proud of our collective efforts in 2025 and will continue to advocate on behalf of Ohio's public power utilities and their customers in 2026.

On behalf of the Members,



Michael Beirne
Executive Director, OMEA



Robin Laubaugh
President, OMEA Board of Directors
Mayor, City of Wadsworth

THE OMEA PERFORMS FIVE PRIMARY FUNCTIONS:



Monitor Legislation



Advocate



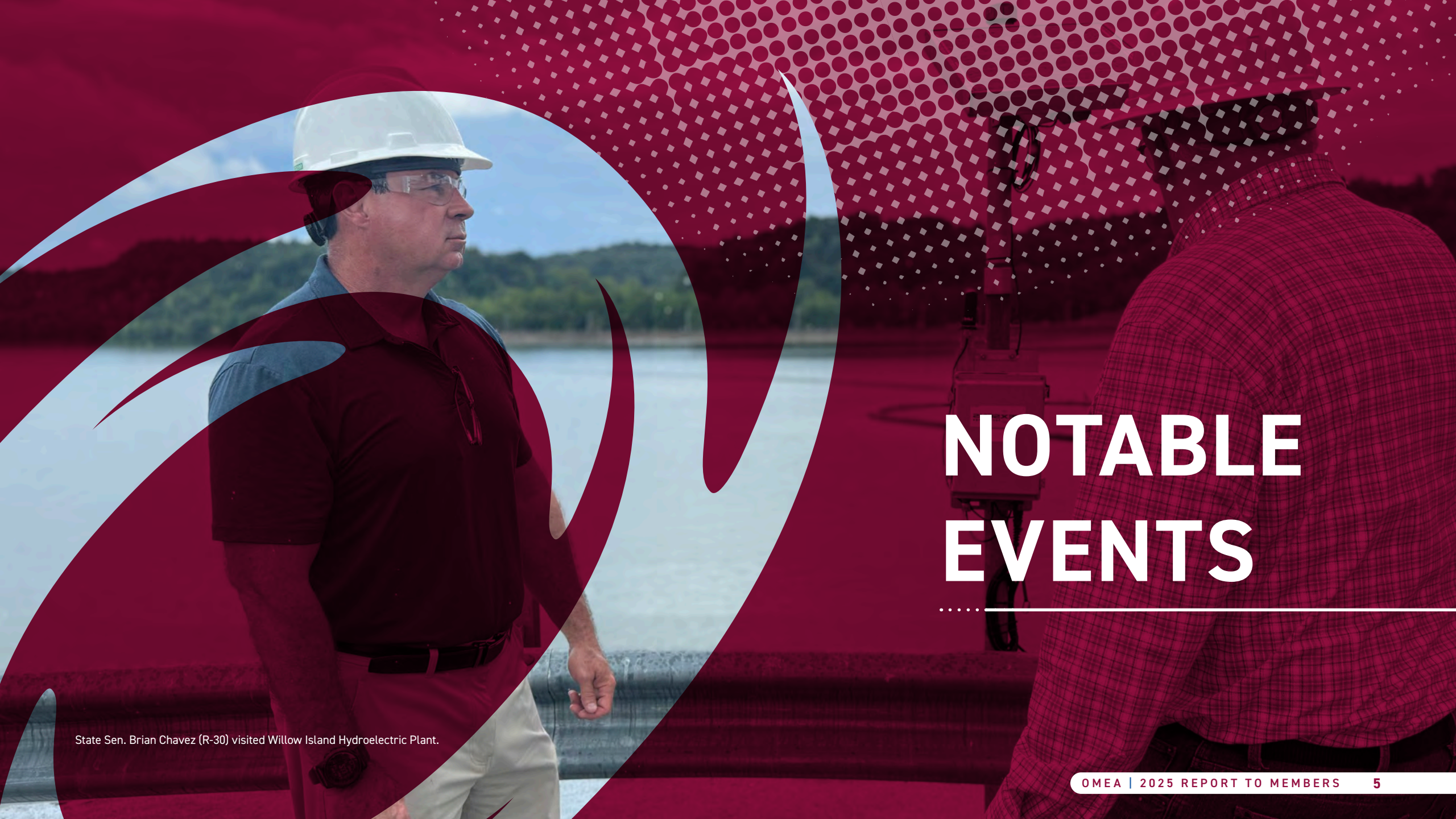
Build Coalitions



Act as an Information Resource



Organize Member Activities



NOTABLE EVENTS

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State Sen. Brian Chavez (R-30) visited Willow Island Hydroelectric Plant.

2025 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The OMEA General Membership Meeting took place on Sept. 23 as part of the 2025 AMP Annual Conference in Columbus.

At the meeting, OMEA Members heard updates on association activities, elected four Members to the OMEA Board of Directors, and approved the induction of nine retired or retiring public power officials as OMEA Honorary Members.

The OMEA is guided by a 16-member Board of Directors elected by their peers to staggered four-year terms. Board seats are held by OMEA Member communities. During the OMEA General Membership Meeting, the communities of Bryan (Mayor Carrie Schlade), Painesville (Council Member Paul Hach) and Westerville (Council Vice Chair Megan Czako) were re-elected to four-year terms on the OMEA Board of Directors. Additionally, the community of Oberlin (Council Member Kristin Peterson) was elected to a four-year term on the OMEA Board of Directors.

Following the OMEA General Membership Meeting, the OMEA Board of Directors conducted its annual reorganization meeting and re-elected City of Wadsworth Mayor Robin Laubaugh as President of the Board. City of Bryan Mayor Carrie Schlade and Village of Montpelier Mayor Steve Yagelski were re-elected to the Board's three-member Executive Committee.



▼ OMEA Executive Committee



During the OMEA General Membership Meeting, the following individuals were recognized and named OMEA Honorary Members:

VILLAGE OF PROSPECT

Ken Blue

VILLAGE OF CUSTAR

Jerald Clink

CITY OF TIPP CITY

Jerry Gee

CITY OF NEWTON FALLS

Bill George

CITY OF BRYAN

Richard "Dick" Long

CITY OF GALION

Mayor Tom O'Leary

CITY OF HAMILTON

Michael Ryan

VILLAGE OF LUCAS

Tim Stallard

VILLAGE OF CYGNET

Steve VanScoder



The OMEA General Membership selects Honorary Members in recognition of individuals whose dedication and service on behalf of public power has been of the highest order.

Richard "Dick" Long, a longtime Bryan Board of Public Affairs member (center) accepts the OMEA Honorary Membership from Bryan Mayor Carrie Schlade, a member of the OMEA Executive Committee and Michael Beirne, OMEA Executive Director.



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1. Dover Mayor Shane Gunnoe met with Rep. Michael Rulli (OH-6).
2. Officials from Bryan, Clyde, Edgerton and Montpelier met with Rep. Marcy Kaptur (OH-9).
3. Hamilton officials, including Bill Hudson, Director of Utility Operations (left), former Hamilton City Council Member Michael Ryan, and Edwin Porter, PE, Hamilton Executive Director of Infrastructure and AMP Board of Trustees Secretary, traveled to Washington, D.C., for the 2025 APPA Legislative Rally.
4. Officials from Blanchester met with Rep. Dave Taylor (R-2).
5. OMEA Board Members and OMEA officials met with Sen. Jon Husted (R-OH).



2025 APPA LEGISLATIVE RALLY

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OMEA Members were well represented at the 2025 APPA Legislative Rally, Feb. 24-26 in Washington, D.C.

The annual rally provided a valuable opportunity for public power leaders to engage directly in the legislative process and raise awareness about the issues affecting their systems and customers.

More than 40 OMEA Member community officials from 18 communities attended the Rally. In addition to the Ohio attendees, representatives from the AMP footprint states of Delaware, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia also participated.

OMEA Member officials focused their discussions with lawmakers on the importance of tax-exempt financing, ensuring reliability of the electric grid, following through with grant funding under existing programs, adopting reasonable permitting reform, highlighting the challenges with the power sector greenhouse gas rule, and mitigating the negative impacts of sequestration on BABs and New CREBs.

A key part of the rally was the APPA Legislative & Resolutions (L&R) Committee meeting, where OMEA

Executive Director Michael Beirne served as Vice Chair. During the meeting, APPA members adopted nine resolutions to establish their positions on key issues affecting the industry. The OMEA supported all the resolutions, including support for hydropower, electric vehicles, safe and effective drone use, and reliable and affordable energy infrastructure. View the full list of resolutions at www.publicpower.org/policy/resolutions.

Throughout the week, OMEA Members met with U.S. Senators Jon Husted (R-Ohio) and Bernie Moreno (R-Ohio) and U.S. Representatives Troy Balderson (R-12), Mike Carey (R-15), Bob Latta (R-5), Marcy Kaptur (D-9), Michael Rulli (R-6), Emilia Sykes (D-13) and Dave Taylor (R-2).

In addition, OMEA Members met with congressional staff from the offices of U.S. Representatives Joyce Beatty (D-3), Shontel Brown (D-11), Warren Davidson (R-8), Dave Joyce (R-14) and Max Miller (R-7).

APPA POLICY MAKERS COUNCIL FLY-IN

Three OMEA officials serve as members of the APPA Policy Makers Council (PMC), which is comprised of governing officials from public power utilities across the United States.

The members of the PMC meet twice a year with elected representatives and congressional staff to advocate for public power's legislative and regulatory priorities. Wayne York, a Jackson Center Village Council Member and an OMEA Board of Directors Member, and Paul Hach, a Painesville City Council Member and an OMEA Board of Directors Member, joined about 40 officials from across the country in the PMC's summer fly-in event in July in Washington, D.C. Montpelier Mayor Steve Yagelski also serves as a member of the PMC.

York and Hach, along with OMEA staff, met with staff from the offices of U.S. Senators Jon Husted (R-Ohio) and Bernie Moreno (R-Ohio) and U.S. Representatives Troy Balderson (R-12), Dave Joyce (R-14) and Michael Rulli (R-6).

During the meetings, York and Hach provided information and updates on important issues currently facing public power, including the importance of tax-exempt financing, ensuring reliability of the electric grid, following through with grant funding under existing programs, adopting reasonable permitting reform, and highlighting the challenges with the power sector greenhouse gas rule.



1. During the APPA Policy Makers Council fly-in in 2025, Sen. Jon Husted (R-Ohio), second from left, met with Wayne York, a Jackson Center Village Council Member and OMEA Board of Directors Member; Paul Hach, a Painesville City Council Member and an OMEA Board Member; and Michael Beirne, OMEA Executive Director.

At the state level, the OMEA was pleased to finish the year without the passage of any major legislation that would be detrimental to Ohio's public power communities.

The Ohio House Energy Committee began the year working on and eventually passing HB 15, comprehensive energy legislation for the state aimed at incentivizing new generation resources. The OMEA was active in advocating for the positions of public power throughout the discussions of HB 15 and succeeded in securing amendments to allow for an accelerated Ohio Power Siting Board review of projects. In addition, the bill was amended to clarify language and ensure that public power communities are not required to publish unnecessary heat maps of transmission assets.

Later in the year, the Ohio House passed HB 96, the state's operating budget for fiscal years 2026–27. During HB 96 negotiations, the OMEA secured an amendment that modified the village dissolution process established in HB 331, which passed in 2024. The amendment added the term “electric service” to the list of qualifying services counted under the law to prevent a potential automatic ballot question on village dissolution.

In addition, the OMEA and its Members have been opposing the advancement of HB 92 and Senate Bill (SB) 118, both of which would dramatically change how municipal utilities recover unpaid utility bills and prohibit local utility arrangements with landlords. The OMEA has actively met with members of both chambers, provided numerous rounds of testimony and worked with other stakeholder groups to stop or significantly revise these bills. That effort continues into 2026.

▼ Jeff Brediger, Director of Utilities for the City of Orrville, provided a tour of the Orrville power plant to State Rep. Meredith Craig (R-77) in September 2025.



▲ Dover officials provided a tour of Dover Light and Power facilities to State Rep. Jodi Salvo (R-51), pictured in the center.

The OMEA actively advocated for public power on several other pending legislative issues, including:

- **HB 173/HB 265/SB 108**
Legislation that would outline in various ways how submetering entities should be regulated under Ohio law
- **SB 106**
Legislation that would regulate the ownership of electric vehicle charging stations by investor-owned utilities
- **HB 227**
Legislation that would change Ohio's underground damage prevention law
- **SB 294**
Legislation that would establish a new state energy siting policy
- **HB 303/SB 231**
Legislation that would establish the community energy program (formerly the community solar bill)
- **Senate Concurrent Resolution 2**
A resolution that urges state and federal officials to support investment in the security, reliability and resiliency of the electric grid
- **SB 2**
Legislation that establishes a comprehensive energy legislation plan for the state (the Senate version of legislation passed via HB 15)
- **Various bills** within the House and Senate related to changing the state's property tax system and its impact on municipal entities



The full list of bills being monitored is available in the OMEA legislative tracking system on the AMP Member Extranet.

In 2025, formal legislative activity in Washington was limited as the second Trump Administration got underway. However, Congress passed a major funding package, which was signed into law as the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act.”

That bill raised concerns among public power and municipal stakeholders by proposing measures that could have jeopardized federal funding for the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s disaster response efforts while also threatening the long-standing tax-exempt status of municipal financing. Despite these circumstances, the OMEA’s efforts led to a budget package that did not include these potentially detrimental policies.

Beyond the budget package, the OMEA again worked to raise awareness and advocate on issues of importance to Ohio’s public power communities. Throughout the year, the OMEA actively engaged with federal lawmakers and tracked legislative proposals that could have been detrimental or beneficial to its Members. The OMEA was closely involved with advocating on a number of important issues throughout the year.

Managing the transition with a new Trump administration required a focus on several policy areas, and the OMEA advocated with the

congressional delegation to protect public power. The OMEA specifically noted that there must be a holistic plan in place for generation resources that can produce reliable, baseload and intermediate/peaking electricity that can be committed and dispatched when needed.

In addition, the OMEA sought clarity from Congress on the status of several federal grant programs under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). AMP and some Members had applied for grant funding through IIJA for hydropower investment, cybersecurity grants, and grid resiliency and innovation, all prior to the reconsideration of the programs in 2025.

The OMEA also submitted comments for congressional discussions on permitting reform. These comments outlined the current inefficient and lengthy process, which involves various state and federal agencies, and suggested streamlining it and eliminating duplicative reviews.

The ongoing issue of the sequestration of BABs and New CREBs continued to be a point of concern in 2025. Combined, AMP and OMEA Members have lost more than \$50 million to date and stand to lose another \$28 million through the end of the sequester, scheduled to run through 2031. While the issue wasn’t resolved, we are pleased that Congress did not extend the sequestration yet again.

The OMEA was invited to participate in the Public Finance Network’s Municipal Bonds 101 briefing for congressional staff. OMEA Executive Director Michael Beirne spoke, along with Scranton Mayor Paige Gebhart Cognetti; Nancy Feldman, Chief of the Division of Fiscal Management of Montgomery County, Md., and Robin Wiessmann, Executive Director and CEO of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

OMEA Executive Director Michael Beirne (right) participated in a municipal bonds briefing on Capitol Hill.



Staff and Westerville officials met with Rep. Troy Balderson (R-12) during the 2025 APPA Legislative Rally.



OMEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS*



MEMBER: WADSWORTH

Mayor Robin Laubaugh

President



MEMBER: BRYAN

Mayor Carrie Schlade

Executive Committee



MEMBER: MONTPELIER

Mayor Steve Yagelski

Executive Committee



MEMBER: CELINA

Mayor Jeffrey Hazel



MEMBER: CUYAHOGA FALLS

Mayor Don Walters



MEMBER: DOVER

Mayor Shane Gunnoe



MEMBER: EDGERTON

Mayor Robert Day



MEMBER: HAMILTON

Timothy Naab

Council Member



MEMBER: JACKSON CENTER

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Council Member

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Council Member



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MEMBER: PAINESVILLE

Paul Hach

Council Member



MEMBER: PIONEER

Mayor Ed Kidston



MEMBER: ST. MARYS

Mayor Joe Hurlburt



MEMBER: WESTERVILLE

Megan Czako

Council Chair



EX OFFICIO: OMEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Michael Beirne

*ACCURATE AT THE TIME OF PUBLISHING



OMEA

OHIO MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC
ASSOCIATION

OHIO MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

1111 Schrock Road, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43229

614.540.1111
amppartners.org/about/omea

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Michael Beirne

OMEA Executive Director
mbeirne@amppartners.org