



Department
of Commerce

NEWS RELEASE

John R. Kasich, Governor

**Andre T. Porter, Director
Department of Commerce**

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GOVERNOR KASICH SIGNS HOUSE BILL 486 CREATING INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE BUSINESS COMPLIANCE

Transformative new program aims to recognize compliant businesses and incentivize continued compliance

COLUMBUS, Oh. – Today Governor John R. Kasich signed HB 486 which includes the creation of the Ohio Business Compliance Incentive (OBCI) program which is a transformative approach to regulation. This program will encourage compliance with regulations while safeguarding Ohioans.

“This is a program that will continue to allow the Department of Commerce to hold businesses accountable, but will recognize and incentivize those who are consistently compliant,” said Andre T. Porter, Director of the Ohio Department of Commerce. “By recognizing and rewarding compliant businesses, we can achieve the goal of getting government out of the way of successful and responsible businesses and we can shift our resources to focus on the fringe actors who are not compliant.”

One of the proposed programs of the OBCI is called “*Operation Safe Stay.*” The State Fire Marshal’s office, a division of the Department of Commerce, inspects and licenses nearly 1,600 hotels and motels in Ohio annually. More than 40% of those inspected are fully compliant during the first inspection and do not require follow-up inspections. This program would publically designate those hotels that consistently meet the highest level of Ohio Fire Code-based fire and life safety standards and Ohio Revised Code based sanitary guidelines as a Safe Stay hotel.

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“The Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association is pleased to see this Administration and the Department of Commerce developing an incentive program for hotels,” said Matthew L. MacLaren, President and CEO of the Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association. “The program will recognize hotels that excel in regulation compliance. This pro-business incentive program will create a positive recognition that hotels will want to achieve.”

Another incentive program would be offered through the Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board (OCILB). Contractors who are up to date with the continuing education credits, have paid their renewal fees on time and have no merited complaints would be allowed to renew their licenses every three years for \$180 instead of annually at \$60.

Tom Shreves, of the National Electrical Contractors of Ohio, hailed this program saying, “The good news for policy makers is the vast majority of electrical contractors are ‘good actors’ who take their responsibilities seriously and consistently meet the standards of the industry as applied by the OCILB.” Shreves also said that this program supports their professionals in Ohio. “In an effort to recognize the efforts of these good actors, HB 486 [OBCI] seeks to streamline their licensing process.”

Director Porter also said that he believes that these programs will help encourage continued compliance, motivate others to become more compliant, and allow the Department of Commerce to focus more time and resources on those businesses that operate on the fringe.

“While these are just two examples of the OBCI, I think that everyone can see where this approach and attitude towards regulation and compliance might be applied to many other industries,” Porter said. “I call upon all industries that are served by the Department of Commerce to consider where we might be able to incentivize them to continue responsible compliance.”

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