



GOVERNMENTAL POLICY GROUP, INC.

RH RESOURCES

17 SOUTH HIGH STREET – SUITE 245

COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-3413

PHONE: 614-461-9335

FAX: 614-461-9336



Week in Review

August 31, 2018

As a service to the clients and friends of Governmental Policy Group, Inc. and RH Resources we would like to extend the following weekly update of events happening around Capitol Square.

ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Rep. Richard Brown (D-Canal Winchester) said Thursday he's drafting legislation to create a cabinet-level Office of Drug Policy to coordinate efforts among state and local governments to fight the opioid epidemic and future addiction crises. Creation of such an office is among the handful of recommendations from the Ohio Mayors Alliance for the next administration and bill supporters said they view both major party candidates for governor as receptive to the concept.

AGING

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman has partnered with the Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism (ServeOhio) to improve access to supports for long-term care (LTC) consumers throughout the state. An AmeriCorps grant administered by ServeOhio will fund 11 AmeriCorps ombudsman specialists who will help regional ombudsman programs recruit volunteers to visit long-term care facilities and consumers' homes to answer questions and resolve complaints about their providers and care.

ARTS, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Facing renewed criticism after making statements in response to his three-game suspension on Aug. 22, Ohio State University (OSU) head football coach Urban Meyer issued another apology late Friday, Aug. 24 specifically aimed at Courtney Smith, the ex-wife of former assistant football coach Zach Smith.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Billed as the final meeting of his administration, the Human Trafficking Commission created by Attorney General Mike DeWine took a deeper look Monday at the mind of the sex trafficking victim and the growing online exploitation of Ohio youth through an explosion of social media websites.

While full access details are being worked out, an attorney general's Advisory Group on Sexual Assault Kit Tracking hopes to select a vendor by year's end for a web portal allowing sexual assault survivors to track the progress of evidence kits. The effort follows a previous announcement from Attorney General Mike DeWine and the introductions of SB323 (Kunze) and HB719 (Pelanda) which mandate agency participation in the tracking program.

BALLOT ISSUES

Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor opposes passage of State Issue 1, the constitutional amendment "To Reduce Penalties for Crimes of Obtaining, Possessing, and Using Illegal Drugs," and Tuesday issued an op-ed article detailing the reasons why. O'Connor notes that, on the surface, the proposal might be seen "as a thoughtful, compassionate and reasonable response" to the difficult and "intractable problem" of the effect of drug penalties on the state's criminal justice system. However, she says, a closer reading reveals "it will have catastrophic consequences for our state."

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine turned Wednesday to the problem of too few foster families and the children of opioid-addicted parents who desperately need them, releasing his first-ever report on the "30 Days to Family" kinship care program.

Children of first-time mothers who received home visits from registered nurses from infancy through age three were less likely to be overweight or obese than children in a control group, according to a new study funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and conducted at the Penn State Hershey Medical Center in Hershey, PA.

Research firm Child Trends said there has been a "dramatic increase" in the number of births out of wedlock from 1990 to 2016, with striking variations by education and race, citing National Vital Statistics System birth data. Looking at overall averages, 28 percent of births occurred outside of marriage in 1990, compared to 40 percent of births in 2016.

CORRECTIONS

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) investigated a "substance exposure" that sent 28 people at Ross Correctional Institution (RCI) in Chillicothe to the hospital for evaluation, with another person

treated on scene Wednesday. The patrol later determined staff and inmates had come in contact with a mixture of heroin and fentanyl. Patrol officials and those in Pennsylvania said they knew of no connection between the RCI incident and similar ones in Western Pennsylvania.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

The ACLU of Ohio and Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI) released what the groups called the first statewide public opinion poll of voters' views of bail and the pretrial justice system. "The new data show that Ohio voters want to reduce arrests, restrict detention, replace money bonds, and increase equity by addressing the racial and economic disparities in the system. The poll findings also showed that 54 percent of Ohio voters support major reforms to the criminal justice system, with 21 percent of those believing that a complete overhaul is needed," the groups said.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Gov. John Kasich announced the approval of assistance for four projects set to create 1,153 new jobs and retain 278 jobs statewide. During its monthly meeting, the Ohio Tax Credit Authority (TCA) reviewed economic development proposals brought to the board by JobsOhio and its regional partners. Collectively, the projects are expected to result in more than \$36 million in payroll, and spur more than \$109 million in investments across Ohio.

EDUCATION

Superintendent Paolo DeMaria and members of the State Board of Education met at the Statehouse Tuesday morning to officially launch "#EachChildOurFuture," the five-year strategic plan for education in the state. The plan will serve as a roadmap for schools, educators, policymakers and others to guide the development of practices and policies to improve the entire state education system. DeMaria praised the work of everyone involved in the planning process, which began in the summer of 2017.

As Ohio's career technical high schools transition to new federal compliance standards under the Perkins Act, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Career-Technical Planning District (CTPD) Report Card Workgroup discussed changes that should be made to year-end district report cards.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) on Monday announced the introduction of federal legislation that seeks to direct federal funds recovered from the former online charter school, the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT), go to the schools in Ohio that lost them. The bill would require that any of the more than \$130 million that ECOT received from the federal government since 2000 go to schools instead of the U.S. Treasury's general fund.

As students around the state are returning to classes, a coalition of organizations has released a set of school safety principles focused on improving school climate and training to improve safety instead of further investment in school resource officers. The "#counselorsnotcuffs" campaign is supported by the Juvenile Justice Coalition, the ACLU of Ohio, the Ohio Poverty Law Center, Policy Matters Ohio and other organizations.

ELECTIONS

The Voting Machine Acquisition Advisory Committee held its first meeting Friday, hearing from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) and Office of Budget and Management (OBM) and making plans for its next meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 5. The committee was established through SB135 (LaRose) and will advise DAS and the secretary of state on acquisition and funding of new voting systems.

ELECTIONS 2018

Republican State Sen. Troy Balderson (Zanesville) hung on to his slim lead in Ohio's 12th Congressional District to win the unexpired term for the remainder of 2018 over Democrat Danny O'Connor in the Aug. 7 special election. The Franklin County Board of Elections (FCBOE), which as the most populous county in the district, Friday certified the results from the precincts spanning seven counties that are included in the sprawling district. It reported that Balderson received a total of 104,328 or 50.12 percent of the votes to O'Connor's 102,648 (49.32 percent). Green Party candidate Joe Manchik received 1,165 votes for .56 percent of the votes cast. Balderson's winning margin of 0.8 percent exceeds the 0.5 percent threshold that would have triggered a recount.

Secretary of State Jon Husted announced the official title for state Issue 1 that will be on the November ballot and certified the official form of the ballot for the 2018 General Election. According to Husted, the official title will appear on the ballot as: "To Reduce Penalties for Crimes of Obtaining, Possessing, and Using Illegal Drugs."

Secretary of State Jon Husted said Wednesday that his office will begin mailing absentee ballot applications to voters this week ahead of November's General Election. Applications should start arriving in mailboxes shortly after the Labor Day holiday.

Democratic auditor nominee Zack Space Monday announced he would investigate the impact free trade deals have had on Ohioans, their families and communities should he be elected in November. Space called the plan "Working Families First," and the plan calls for "common sense, holistic investigations that determine the extent to which unfair free trade policy has impacted Ohio's working families and local communities."

On Tuesday, Franklin County Sheriff Dallas Baldwin, Ohio FOP Director of Government Affairs Mike Wineman, Ohio FOP Vice President Jason Pappas, and Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein continued criticism of Attorney General Mike DeWine, the Republican nominee for governor, over a recent story that found agents in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) had expired bulletproof vests at a press conference sponsored by the Ohio Democratic Party. The sheriff and officers stressed the importance of officer safety and said it is unacceptable that BCI agents had to go without proper protection.

The Senate Democratic Caucus Tuesday said it has filed a public records request with Rep. Nathan Manning's (R-North Ridgeville) office and Ohio House administrative staff seeking information related to an FBI investigation into former House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger. The caucus is looking to tie Manning, who is running for the Senate seat currently held by his mother, Rep. Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville), to Rosenberger a day after the Ohio House released documents showing

details of the FBI investigation. Manning reportedly was on a trip with Rosenberger to England last year that is under scrutiny.

The Franklin County Board of Elections has tied on a challenge to the residency of the Republican candidate in the 20th House District, Bobby Mitchell, sending the issue to Secretary of State Jon Husted.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- In a dual endorsement, the Ohio Society of CPAs also endorsed Jim Renacci for U.S. Senate in addition to Sen. Sherrod Brown.
- 314 Action endorsed Casey Weinstein for Ohio House and Louise Valentine for Ohio Senate.
- Civilians for Progressive Care endorsed Louise Valentine for Ohio Senate.
- NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio endorsed Paul Bradley, Cecil Thomas, Sharon Sweda, Scott Dailey and Lauren Friedman for the Ohio Senate; and Kevin Barnett, Phil Robinson, Aziz Ahmad, Janine Boyd, Bride Sweeney, Adam Miller, Russell Harris, Christine Fisher, Catherine Ingram, Tavia Galonski, Paula Hicks-Hudson, Gary Newman, Lorraine Wilburn, Susan Vaughn, Kathy Wyenandt, Kelly Kraus Mencke, James Johnson, Jeremy Blake, Kim McCarthy, John Kennedy, Brett Pransky, Amanda Finrock, Glenn Coble, Rachel Crooks and Kristin Geis for the Ohio House.
- 2014 Libertarian gubernatorial candidate Charlie Earl endorsed Travis Irvine for governor.
- The Ohio Chamber of Commerce Political Action Committee endorsed Dave Yost for attorney general and Frank LaRose for secretary of state.
- The campaign of Louise Valentine announced the endorsement of the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio.
- The campaign of Kathleen Clyde announced the endorsement of the Ohio Sierra Club for secretary of state.

ENVIRONMENT

Ohio Sen. Troy Balderson (R-Zanesville) provided opening remarks Tuesday for Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in what the lawmaker described as his "first official duty" as U.S. representative-elect. Balderson joined Wheeler in Columbus to address the environmental impacts of Monday's U.S.-Mexico Trade Agreement and USEPA's Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule announced last week.

Harmful algae isn't just a problem for high-profile bodies of water -- it poses serious, toxic threats in small ponds and lakes as well, new research has found. A team of researchers from Ohio State University (OSU) examined water samples from two dozen ponds and small lakes in rural Ohio and found plenty of cause for concern, with particularly high levels of toxins at one lake.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Documents released Monday as part of a public records request indicate that federal authorities seized a personal computer, three boxes of documents and a thumb drive in May as part of an investigation into former House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger and at least three lobbyists connected to the payday lending industry. The documents also revealed the feds are looking into possible bribery, extortion, and violations of the Travel Act.

Sen. President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) said Tuesday the Senate definitely will meet either on Tuesday, Sept. 25 or Wednesday, Sept. 26 -- and possibly the week before. Despite the U.S. House

of Representative's fall calendar and swearing-in ceremony for U.S. Rep.-elect Troy Balderson (R-OH), still official occupant of Ohio's 20th Senate District, Obhof said his replacement will be named in November following the election.

GOVERNOR

Ohio Gov. John Kasich ordered flags lowered to half-staff on all public buildings to honor the life and service of U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), who died of brain cancer at age 81 on Saturday, through his burial.

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Holly M. Hollingsworth of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the Ohio Cemetery Dispute Resolution Commission for a term beginning Aug. 23, 2018, and ending July 1, 2022.
- Ben Mitchell of Glenford (Perry County) reappointed to the Ohio Hocking Technical College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Aug. 27, 2018, and ending Aug. 26, 2021.
- Mayor Aaron D. Montz of Tiffin (Seneca County) reappointed to the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission for a term beginning Aug. 27, 2018, and ending Aug. 21, 2022.
- Beth Ann Ball of Worthington (Franklin County) and Mary E. Lavey of Fremont (Sandusky County) reappointed to the Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Athletic Trainers Board for terms beginning Aug. 28, 2018, and ending Aug. 27, 2021.
- Sangita M. Vora of West Chester (Butler County) to the New Americans Advisory Committee for a term beginning Aug. 27, 2018, and ending May 14, 2019.
- Olivia Hook of Grove City (Franklin County), Paul A. Jarvis of Powell (Franklin County), Jacqueline Stromberg of Wickliffe (Lake County) and Gina E. Wilt of Hilliard (Franklin County) to the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council for terms beginning Aug. 28, 2018, and ending March 14, 2021.
- William Alloway of Coshocton (Coshocton County) to the Reclamation Commission for a term beginning Aug. 29, 2018, and ending June 28, 2021.
- Gilbert G. Kaster of McConnelsville (Morgan County) to the Reclamation Commission for a term beginning Aug. 29, 2018, and ending June 28, 2022.
- Christopher A. Macisco of Delaware (Delaware County) to the Reclamation Commission for a term beginning Aug. 29, 2018, and ending June 28, 2023.

GREAT LAKES

The first meeting Tuesday of the "Toward A Cleaner Lake Erie Working Group" saw researchers presenting data and possible strategies for addressing harmful algal blooms plaguing Lake Erie, many of which centered on encouraging farmers to implement best practices when applying fertilizer. Chaired by Sen. Bob Hackett (R-London) and Rep. Brian Hill (R-Zanesville), the working group was established by the Legislature following Gov. John Kasich's executive order to designate eight watersheds in the Western Basin of Lake Erie as "watersheds in distress."

A task force formed by the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission (OSWCC) to review Gov. John Kasich's proposal to designate eight watersheds in the Western Basin of Lake Erie as "in distress" began work Thursday on recommendations that could lead to the full commission agreeing with or going against that order.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The addiction epidemic in Ohio doesn't just have an impact on health systems; it drains from the economic system, the criminal justice system, the foster care system and many others. For this reason, investing in community behavioral health is good public policy as well as fiscal policy, the Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers says. Earlier this month, the Ohio Council published "Policy Solutions for Ohio's Addiction & Mental Health Crisis," outlining the areas in which the state should focus if it wants to have significant effects in fighting the opioid epidemic.

Health insurance enrollment for individuals not on a group plan or their employer's plan dropped 12 percent overall in 2017, and data from 2018 showed that the first quarter enrollment is down 12 percent as well, according to a brief from the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF).

HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS

A Columbus Metropolitan Club panel Wednesday said Columbus and other cities could rapidly see housing affordability go from a challenge to a crisis if the issue is not addressed quickly. The panelists also said that addressing the issue will need a regional approach that can't be solved by just one entity. The panel, titled "Give Me Shelter," featured Rachel Kleit, the associate dean for faculty affairs in the College of Engineering at Ohio State University; Michael Outrich, a social research at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at Ohio State; and Columbus City Councilwoman Jaiza Page. The forum was moderated by E.J. Thomas, president and CEO of Habitat for Humanity MidOhio, who noted other cities such as Seattle and Charlotte grew quickly and found themselves in a housing crisis. He said in looking at those other cities, there is an opportunity to get ahead of the curve, adding there is no reason a similar crisis should happen in Central Ohio.

Columbus is the fourth-best large city for first-time home buyers, according to a recent report from personal finance site WalletHub that ranked 300 cities of varying sizes across "27 key indicators of market attractiveness, affordability and quality of life."

JUDICIAL

The Supreme Court of Ohio Friday allowed Duke Energy to intervene in the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) and Ohio Manufacturers' Association's (OMA) suit against the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) -- an attempt to stop the utility from charging customers for the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation's (OVEC) aging coal plants.

The Ohio Supreme Court is now accepting public comment on proposed amendments for the annual update to its Rules of Practice and Procedure, including those addressing waiver of service and pre-trial release in criminal cases. The Commission on the Rules of Practice and Procedure recommends this series of amendments to implement a waiver of service provision, like the one used in the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Under this arrangement, defendants who voluntarily waive service will be given an extended time to file an answer.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio sent a letter Tuesday to 69 Ohio municipalities urging a repeal on panhandling bans, which the group said are unconstitutional. The letters were part

of a nationally coordinated effort by the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. The ACLU said that since the U.S. Supreme Court issued a decision in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* that addressed content-based restrictions on signs, every case brought against panhandling ordinances has led to those ordinances being found unconstitutional.

Former Youngstown Mayor Charles Sammarone and former Youngstown Finance Director David Bozanich have been indicted by a grand jury on public corruption charges, an indictment jointly announced Thursday by Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine, Ohio Auditor of State Dave Yost and Mahoning County Prosecuting Attorney Paul Gains. DeWine, Yost and Gains said the indictment is part of an ongoing public corruption probe of corrupt activity that includes a Poland, OH, businessman who was previously indicted on corruption charges last year.

MARIJUANA

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy said cannabidiol (CBD) oil that is derived from hemp or from marijuana cannot be sold anywhere but at a licensed medical marijuana control program dispensary. However, while 56 provisional medical marijuana dispensary licenses have been issued, none of the dispensaries are operational yet.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is accepting new grant applications for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) until Thursday, Nov. 15.

POLITICS

From President Donald Trump on down, speakers at the Ohio Republican Party's 2018 state dinner Friday used stark terms to contrast themselves from their Democratic opponents, saying they believe a "red wave" rather than a "blue" one will be seen in November. Trump's keynote address was the first by a sitting president and it drew the largest crowd of any state dinner, Chairman Jane Murphy Timken said. Trump echoed remarks from his various recent rallies, saying that Democrats are focused on "obstruction and resistance" rather than acknowledging his presidential victory, and he attacked them on range of issues, particularly immigration, saying he needed more Republicans elected to continue his agenda.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Gary Mohr, who has served as director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) since the beginning of the Kasich administration in 2011, is leaving at the end of August. He will be replaced by Stuart Hudson, who has been serving as deputy director of the department, Gov. John Kasich announced Tuesday. Kasich, who noted in a prepared statement that the appointment is effective Aug. 31, said Mohr is leaving for a new opportunity in the criminal justice field.

UTILITIES

Issuing his long-awaited PowerForward report, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Chairman Asim Haque said Wednesday that -- while making "no final decisions" on the state's energy future -- the grid modernization push will implement performance-based ratemaking and utility cost caps allowing "no double recovery" by electric distribution utilities (EDU), which now

will be expected to welcome investments by competitive retail electric services (CRES) both behind and "in front" of the meter. Commission members unanimously adopted the "Roadmap to Ohio's Electricity Future" and its 44 pages of analysis and policy following a yearlong discussion of grid modernization by PUCO and hundreds of energy experts.

VETERANS

Google announced this week that veterans entering the civilian workforce will now be able to use their military job code to look for similar civilian openings on their search engine platform. Google is also making that capability available to general and company-specific job search sites, including CareerBuilder; the feature is available immediately. In Ohio, the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) has offered similar resources through the veterans section of OhioMeansJobs.com, which includes a "military skills translator" that can connect veterans with specific careers and job openings associated with their service job code, akin to the Google initiative. That service was added approximately four years ago, ODJFS spokesman Bret Crow told *Hannah News*.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Cities and townships will enjoy the biggest savings in public employer insurance rates among Ohio's land-based subdivisions next year if the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) approves individual class allocations for government jurisdictions as part of a 12 percent premium cut passed by its board of directors Friday. Townships would pay 16.9 percent and cities 15.4 percent less for state insurance, followed by counties and villages at 9.2 percent and 5 percent less, respectively. Public schools would see an 8.2 percent drop in BWC costs, though the largest reductions -- on the order of 20 percent-plus -- would go to joint vocational schools, hospitals, libraries and public workers' relief.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) is preparing for new leadership as Administrator/CEO Sarah Morrison, a Trump nominee to the U.S. District Court, cedes some of her official duties to other executive officers at the nation's largest state insurance fund. Gov. John Kasich has asked bureau directors to prepare for a "strong transition to new BWC leadership," according to an unnamed board member, though Morrison could not confirm or deny after this month's board meeting whether she is due for Senate confirmation hearings before or after the November election.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:

SENATE:

No legislative activity to report.

HOUSE:

No legislative activity to report.