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Week in Review
February 22, 2016

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.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (ACA)

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), as of Feb. 1, 12.7 million Americans selected health plans for 2016 coverage through Health Insurance Marketplaces found on the HealthCare.gov platform or through a state-based marketplace under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). That includes over 4 million new consumers in the HealthCare.gov states, which includes Ohio, who signed up for coverage this year. The total includes 243,715 Ohioans who either enrolled or reenrolled during the third enrollment period that ended at midnight on Jan. 31.

EDUCATION

The House Education Committee revised its measure to reform truancy laws last Tuesday, delaying by one year when the new rules would take effect, to the 2017-2018 school year, while emphasizing that court adjudications for truancy are to be a last resort and that schools cannot expel students solely on the basis of repeated absences. Meanwhile, proponents testified in support of HB 410 (Hayes-Rezabek) at Tuesday's hearing, lauding its focus on collaboration and early intervention and its relevance to broader conversations about school disciplinary policy.

Auditor Dave Yost, whose office investigated manipulation of student grade and attendance data in Columbus City Schools, said Thursday he was "alarmed" by a report that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) was offering shortened license suspensions to dozens of district administrators.

ELECTIONS 2016

The deadline to register to vote in the March 15 presidential primary election was Tuesday, Feb. 16 -- 30 days before the election -- with in-person and by mail-in absentee voting beginning the next day, Wednesday, Feb. 17, Secretary of State Jon Husted said. For more information, visit www.MyOhioVote.com.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

Rep. Jim Butler (R-Dayton) announced his plan to eliminate Ohio's \$775 million unemployment compensation (UC) debt currently owed to the federal government by borrowing money from the Rainy Day Fund (RDF).

ENVIRONMENT

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) terminated two Central Office employees and demoted one Northeast District Office employee following an internal investigation of its response to the village of Sebring's water issues, the agency announced Wednesday.

Proposed rules for public drinking water systems and laboratories on the reporting and monitoring of harmful algal blooms (HABs) will be the focus of an upcoming Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) public hearing. The Wednesday, Feb. 24 hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room A at the Lazarus Government Center, according to the agency.

GAMING

The Ohio Casino Control Commission approved the first round of internal controls for the Cleveland and Cincinnati casinos that will go into effect when the properties transition to new

management. Rock Gaming LLC is taking over management of the two properties after Caesars Entertainment decided to pull out of the Ohio market.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Rep. John Boccieri (D-New Middletown) called for funding for the Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund, a reserve created in 2003 to support efforts to shutter or renovate lead-contaminated homes and improve lead screenings of at-risk children. The legislator cited a *Plain Dealer* report that found the state fund has been empty since it was established in the 124th General Assembly.

GOVERNOR

Gov. John Kasich signed the following bills into law: **SB2** (Peterson), which expressly incorporates changes in the Internal Revenue Code since April 1, 2015, into Ohio law. An emergency measure, it went into effect on Sunday, Feb. 14.; **SB60** (Hughes), which designates a portion of Interstate Route 670 as the "Dana G. 'Buck' Rinehart Memorial Highway"; **HB17** (Blessing-Landis), which provides civil immunity for architects, contractors, engineers, surveyors, and tradespersons providing volunteer services during a declared emergency; **HB98** (Brown), which designates May 14 as "Childhood Apraxia of Speech Awareness Day"; and **HB121**, (Stinziano-Ruhl) which designates the last week of July as "Service Dog Awareness Week."

The governor made the following appointments during the week:

- Fred G. DiBiasi of Middletown (Butler County) reappointed to the Savings and Loan Association and Savings Bank Board for a term beginning Feb. 12, 2016, and ending Jan. 31, 2019.
- Susan E. Kearns of Salem (Columbiana County) to the State Board of Emergency Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services for a term beginning Feb. 12, 2016, and ending Nov. 12, 2018.
- Dr. Kara M. Morris of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Dentist Loan Repayment Advisory Board for a term beginning Feb. 16, 2016 and ending Jan. 28, 2018.
- Dr. Lisa A. Richards of Willoughby (Lake County) reappointed to the Dentist Loan Repayment Advisory Board for a term beginning Feb. 16, 2016 and ending Jan. 28, 2018.
- Dr. Gary Riggs of Copley (Summit County), Alan L. Sironen of Columbia Station (Lorain County) and Ellen Karnofel of Berlin Center (Mahoning County) reappointed to the Dangerous and Restricted Animals Advisory Board for terms beginning Feb. 18, 2016 and ending Jan. 15, 2019.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of Health Transformation (OHT) Director Greg Moody told members of the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) that Ohio's largest health plans are committed to helping move the state from fee-for-service to a value-based model for health care. He said Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Aetna, Medical Mutual and the five Medicaid managed care plans have pledged to help

design and implement the episode-based payment model and the patient-centered medical home (PCMH) model.

MARIJUANA

Sens. Dave Burke (R-Marysville) and Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights) concluded their planned stops on a listening tour to hear from Ohioans about medical marijuana with an event in Toledo. The senators said they heard from hundreds of Ohioans who gave a broad spectrum of opinions on the subject. According to Yuko, they included families of children with intractable seizures, veterans with PTSD, individuals with MS, individuals recovering from addiction, people with intractable and chronic pain, cancer survivors, members of law enforcement, various health professionals and concerned citizens.

SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary of State Jon Husted said that 8,624 new entities filed to do business in Ohio during January 2016. This is 1,119 more businesses than filed during January 2015, when 7,505 entities were formed.

TAXATION

A new study shows the state's sales tax holiday created in SB 243 (Bacon) boosted Ohio sales tax revenues by \$4.7 million while saving shoppers \$3.3 million in taxes. The report, "Economic Analysis on the Effects of Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday in Ohio," was presented to the Senate Ways and Means Committee during sponsor and proponent testimony on SB 264 (Bacon), which would make the August holiday an annual, permanent event. Committee Chairman Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) said the bill could receive a vote next week.

TRANSPORTATION

A trio of local officials joined other interested parties and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to talk about funding local projects and alternate ways to fund transportation projects before the Joint Legislative Task Force on Transportation Issues last Tuesday.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

HOUSE:

PASSED BY HOUSE

- HB58** WASTE-COLLECTION VEHICLE ACTIONS (Rep. Jack Cera, Rep. John Rogers) To require motor vehicle operators to take certain actions upon approaching a stationary waste collection vehicle collecting refuse on a roadside.
Vote 98-0
- HB87** DAY DESIGNATION (Rep. Stephen Slesnick) To designate October 7 as Moses Fleetwood Walker Day.
Vote 95-0
- HB217** ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSE-AUTHORITY (Rep. Margaret Ann Ruhl) To authorize certain advanced practice registered nurses to have a person involuntarily transported to a hospital for a mental health examination.
Vote 98-0
- HB235** CONCEALED CARRY-ARMED FORCES (Rep. Louis Terhar) To waive the concealed carry license fee for active members of the armed forces and retired and honorably discharged veterans and to accept military experience with firearms as proof of competency with firearms regardless of when the applicant for a license acquired the experience.
Vote 96-2
- HB317** PROTECTED CONSUMER-CREDIT FREEZE (Rep. Ron Maag) To enable the parents or guardian of a protected consumer to freeze that consumer's credit to protect the consumer from identity theft.
Vote 98-0
- HB431** DAY DESIGNATION (Rep. Michael Sheehy, Rep. John Patterson) To designate February 17th as "Annie Glenn Communication Disorders Awareness Day."
Vote 98-0

ADOPTED BY HOUSE

- HCR7** TAX EXEMPT MUNICIPAL BONDS (Rep. Robert Sprague) To urge the President and the Congress of the United States to preserve the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.
Vote 93-0
- HCR26** MILITARY BRATPIN (Rep. Barbara Sears, Rep. Mike Dovilla) To express support for the Military BratPin.

Vote 94-0

HCR30 PIKETON CENTRIFUGE PLANT-FUNDING (Rep. Cliff Rosenberger, Rep. Terry Johnson) To urge Congress and the United States Department of Energy to reverse the decision to terminate funding of the American Centrifuge Program at the American Centrifuge Plant in Piketon, Ohio.

Vote 94-1

HR263 ECONOMIC REPORT-BOATING (Rep. Mike Dovilla) To encourage the President and the Congress of the United States and the United States Office of Management and Budget to support plans to upgrade the Soo Locks at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and encourage the United States Army Corps of Engineers to take expeditious action in preparing an Economic Reevaluation Report.

Vote 94-1

HR313 MINORITY WHIP-GENERAL ASSEMBLY (Rep. Ron Amstutz) Relative to the election of the minority whip, and the assistant minority whip for the 131st General Assembly of Ohio.

Vote 95-0

SENATE:

No Senate activity to report.