



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

September 20, 2019

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

More than half of Ohio counties now participate in the state's program to address families' child welfare and addiction struggles together, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) said. Fourteen additional counties will participate in the Ohio Sobriety, Treatment and Reducing Trauma (Ohio START) effort, amounting to 46 of 88 counties now participating in the program. The program, started as a pilot project by Gov. Mike DeWine when he was attorney general, brings children's services and behavioral health agencies together with juvenile courts to support families dealing simultaneously with substance abuse and child maltreatment, along with the help of peer mentors who've experienced similar struggles. The latest counties to join the program are Allen, Ashland, Auglaize, Cuyahoga, Harrison, Licking, Lucas, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Tuscarawas, Union, Wayne and Williams. The program so far has assisted nearly 900 people, nearly 400 of them children, ODJFS said.

Purdue Pharma, maker of the addictive opioid OxyContin, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy as part of a settlement agreement with Ohio and other jurisdictions, Attorney General Dave Yost said

Monday. "The settlement puts the Sacklers out of the drug business permanently -- not just in the United States, but around the globe. It takes every last dime that Purdue has and billions more from the Sacklers personally," Yost said.

AGRICULTURE

With increased rainfall, warmer nights and a generally shifting climate, Ohio farmers may have to adjust their practices and technologies to accommodate, an Ohio State University (OSU) researcher said at the annual Farm Science Review Wednesday, but that doesn't necessarily mean the changes are all bad. Aaron Wilson, atmospheric research scientist at the Byrd Polar & Climate Research Center and OSU Extension, was joined by moderator and OSU Extension Educator David Marrison for a session of the Farm Science Review's Ask an Expert series at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center near London Wednesday.

Many of the details surrounding how hemp production and processing will work in Ohio remain up in the air as federal and state officials hammer-out rules and regulations for licensure, enforcement and qualifications, two OSU Agriculture Law officials said Monday. Peggy Hall, agricultural and resource law field specialist for the Ohio State University (OSU) College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and Ellen Essman, senior research associate with OSU Extension's Farm Office, were joined Wednesday by moderator and OSU Extension Educator David Marrison for a discussion of hemp and its recent federal legalization in the 2018 U.S. Farm Bill and subsequent state legalization in SB57 (Hill-Huffman) at the annual Farm Science Review's "Ask an Expert" series at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center near London.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Dave Yost announced Friday the arrests of 104 individuals connected with human trafficking in and around Columbus, including buyers, pimps and human trafficking victims, as a part of the "Fourth and Goal" operation that involved more than 30 law enforcement agencies and social services agencies. The operation culminated in a three-day undercover sting conducted in Central Ohio with a four-pronged approach, resulting in the arrests of 24 individuals connected to Internet crimes against children; 31 individuals who attempted to buy sex; 32 individuals connected with street prostitution; and 17 victims of human trafficking.

FY20-21 BUDGET

Ohio's latest round of bonds issued for school building construction got the lowest financing interest rate on record, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) said Friday. Ohio received a 20-year financing rate of 2.35 percent on the \$300 million in bonds issued earlier in the week, OBM said. For comparison, OBM said an interest rate 1 percent higher would have meant \$41.5 million in additional borrowing costs over the life of the loan.

The breaks and loopholes built into Ohio's tax code will cause the state to forgo \$9.8 billion in potential tax revenue in the second year of the current operating budget, progressive think tank Policy Matters Ohio (PMO) wrote in a recent report. That's \$1.3 billion more lost revenue in the FY20-21 biennial budget compared to the previous one, PMO's Wendy Patton and Zach Schiller wrote. "Tax expenditures use public resources. They are a policy choice. Their rapid growth means less is available for basic public services, like good schools, safe bridges and affordable college. Tax

breaks often benefit the wealthy or corporations, which contributes to the upside-down structure of Ohio's state and local tax code," the report states.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Sherwin-Williams Company announced Thursday that it would be exploring options for a new global headquarters and research and development facility, as part of an ongoing review of facility requirements to meet current and future needs of customers and employees. Any transition would not occur until 2023 at the earliest and would require board approval, according to a release. The company has been at its current headquarters in Cleveland since 1930 and operates multiple facilities in Northeast Ohio, employing 4,400 people. Sherwin-Williams will consider multiple potential sites, including locations in Cleveland, Northeast Ohio and several other states.

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

The Commission on Infant Mortality heard from several groups working to increase fathers' engagement on the issue Tuesday, with presentations given on behalf of the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood (OCF), Dads2B and My Brother's Keeper Ohio (MBK Ohio) coalition. Alisha Brown, of the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), also reported on community assessments conducted as a result of 131-SB332 (Jones-Tavares). Commission co-chair Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) said she hopes to introduce a "2.0" version of that bill next year, and that she plans for an additional commission meeting before the end of 2019.

Cleveland saw a 72 percent increase in children enrolled in high-quality preschools after five years of work by the PRE4CLE initiative to expand early childhood learning opportunities in the city, according to a new report. PRE4CLE, a public-private partnership that grew out of the Cleveland school transformation plan, used its annual report released Wednesday as a five-year review of the initiative's progress.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Gov. Mike DeWine concluded his weeklong business development trip to Japan Friday where he and other state and JobsOhio leaders worked to build on the relationship with the state's largest international investor. More than 72,860 Ohioans are employed by 852 different Japanese-owned establishments across the state, according to JobsOhio, and Japan was Ohio's fifth-largest export market in 2018. Releases provided by JobsOhio showed that four automotive industry manufacturing companies already in Ohio will be expanding their operations, creating 331 new jobs and resulting in \$90.5 million in investments.

Lt. Gov. Jon Husted said passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) would represent putting people's interests over partisan differences Thursday as part of an address to the North American Strategy for Competitiveness (NASCO), a tri-national network. He also discussed efforts under Gov. Mike DeWine's administration to bring economic development and education together to meet the needs of the evolving economy.

The Ohio Aerospace and Aviation Technology Committee (OAATC) received updates on DriveOhio's Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Center and the Ohio Aviation Association's (OAA) advocacy efforts Thursday, while further discussing plans for the upcoming Ohio Aerospace Day.

EDUCATION

End-of-course exams (EOCs) are a useful tool that allows states to precisely check how much students have learned in a given high school course, according to a new report from the Fordham Institute. "EOCs, properly deployed, have positive (albeit modest) academic benefits and do so without causing kids to drop out or graduation rates to falter," Chester E. Finn and Amber M. Northern write in the report's foreword.

Superintendent Paolo DeMaria gave State Board of Education members an overview Monday of trends seen in the latest release of state report cards, fielding questions of how changes in the underlying calculations from year to year affect results. DeMaria said the results presented reasons to celebrate as well as areas for improvement, noting for example the overall increase in the statewide performance index and higher statewide proficiency rates in math and English, but lower proficiency rates in science and an increase in the rate of chronic absenteeism.

The Ohio Supreme Court is accepting applications for transportation grants to help schools offset costs to visit the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center. The Supreme Court's Civic Education Section will accept applications online at <https://tinyurl.com/yydx47b> from teachers or administrators through Friday, Sept. 27. The grants will be applied for those who visit through June 2020. All Ohio schools that receive state funds are eligible to apply for a grant, which will be awarded to schools with the highest percentage of students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program as reported by the Ohio Department of Education.

The Senate Education Committee adopted several more changes Tuesday to academic distress commission reform legislation, HB154 (J. Miller-D. Jones), but backed off plans for a vote this week amid continued opposition from local school leaders to a measure that maintains the ultimate sanction of state control.

Despite it being an official Ohio holiday, members of the State Board of Education will meet as planned on Columbus Day, Oct. 14, voting down a resolution that would have rescheduled the meeting to Oct. 15 and 16 at the board's Tuesday meeting.

Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) said again Thursday he's not sure when the chamber will vote on HB154 (Jones-J. Miller), legislation to change the state oversight system for school districts with presently low grades. Asked where he thought Gov. Mike DeWine is on the issue -- Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering) said earlier this week that DeWine is unlikely to sign something that doesn't include an ultimate consequence for failing schools -- Obhof said he'd let the administration speak for itself but would guess DeWine's position is closer to the Senate's proposals than the House's.

ELECTIONS

Secretary of State Frank LaRose's office said it will be reviewing every county's data as they cancel registrations through the Supplemental Process to make sure that no registrations are cancelled under the exemptions laid out in LaRose's directive issued earlier this month. Rep. Bride Rose Sweeney (D-Cleveland) said last week that a review by House Democratic Caucus staff found at least 1,000 voters who had been improperly cancelled, falling under the moving within the county exemption. On Tuesday, Sweeney said a further review discovered more improperly cancelled registrations in Lucas, Franklin, Hamilton and Summit counties.

Voting rights advocates Thursday called on lawmakers to act on improving disclosures by independent groups spending money on Ohio campaigns, citing recent advertising surrounding an effort to referendum nuclear plant bailout legislation HB6 (Callender-Wilkin).

ELECTIONS 2020

Otterbein University in Westerville will host the next debate for Democratic presidential candidates next month, possibly across two nights, the Democratic National Committee announced Friday. The debate will take place Tuesday, Oct. 15 and possibly Wednesday, Oct. 16, depending on how many candidates meet entry criteria.

Mehk Cooke, a small business attorney, announced Tuesday that she will be running for the Republican nomination for the 21st House District. The seat is currently held by Rep. Beth Liston (D-Dublin), who is expected to seek re-election.

ENERGY

Ohio ranks ninth in the nation for the most "energy efficiency" (EE) jobs, according to a report from E4The Future and Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2), with 81,676 total jobs in 2018. That number increased from 79,653 in 2017 and 78,764 in 2016. The report defines EE jobs as "delivery of goods and services that lower energy use by improving technologies, appliances, buildings and energy systems" and said the field was the fastest-growing energy industry for the second year in a row, accounting for around half of the sector's entire job growth in 2018. EE jobs grew by 3.4 percent nationally in 2018, more than double the overall rate, and the projected growth for 2019 is 7.8%.

FEDERAL

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), saying government shutdowns in the past five years have cost taxpayers in Ohio and other states more than \$4 billion in worker back pay, lost revenue and late fees on interest payments, called the threat of another shutdown in the next two weeks "stupid." Portman, chair of the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (PSI), and Ranking Minority Member Tom Carper (D-DE) issued a 183-page bipartisan report Tuesday documenting the last three shutdowns' impact on the economy and key government functions. It says total employee furlough days equal 57,000 years of lost productivity -- a result Portman called "shocking" during a Tuesday press call.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Recently appointment Rep. Jeff LaRe (R-Canal Winchester), who has spent his career in law enforcement and private security, told *Hannah News* that the damage done to Ohio by the opioid epidemic led him to want to help find solutions through public service, thus leading him to apply for the vacant 77th House District seat.

The Senate returned to session Wednesday, honoring former Sen. Joe Uecker (R-Loveland) and outgoing Sen. Lou Terhar (R-Cincinnati) while seating Terry Johnson (R-McDermott) as Uecker's replacement. The chamber unanimously passed the lone bill on its agenda, SB28 (Hottinger), which increases menacing penalties when the perpetrator is menacing someone who is protected by a civil or criminal protection order against the perpetrator.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will hold at least two field hearings on the potentially problematic business practices of large technology companies, Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) and Sen. John Eklund (R-Chardon) announced Tuesday. During a Statehouse press conference, Obhof said the Senate's plan is an "outgrowth" of Attorney General Dave Yost's decision to join multi-state antitrust probes of Facebook and Google.

In other action, the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee reported out HB296 (Lightbody) which creates the "Healthy New Albany" license plate; and HB306 (Ingram) which creates the "Habitat for Humanity of Ohio" license plate.

GOVERNOR

Gov. Mike DeWine Friday named members of an advisory panel to guide lead poisoning prevention and mitigation efforts funded in the recent state budget. According to the governor's office, the Lead Advisory Committee will be assigned to understand all sources of possible lead poisoning; review local, state and national best practices to prevent poisoning; review local, state and national initiatives to abate and remediate lead from all sources of contamination; and develop recommendations for Ohio's response to lead poisoning. Monthly meetings will begin in the fall.

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Jacqueline Gamblin of Englewood (Montgomery County) reappointed to the Central State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2028.
- Jason R. Manns of Springfield (Clark County) to the Central State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2019 and ending June 30, 2026.
- Jeffrey P. Albrecht of Portsmouth (Scioto County) to the Shawnee State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2019 and ending June 30, 2028.
- Jeffery A. Walters of Canal Fulton (Stark County) reappointed to the Stark State College of Technology Board of Trustees for a term beginning Aug. 2, 2019 and ending Aug. 1, 2022.
- Richard S. Walinski of Ottawa Hills (Lucas County) to the University of Toledo Board of Trustees for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2019 and ending July 1, 2028.
- Eleanore Awadalla of Sylvania (Lucas County) has been appointed to the University of Toledo Board of Trustees for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2019 and ending July 1, 2022.
- Colleen H. Heacock of New Concord (Muskingum County) has been reappointed to the Zane State College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Aug. 1, 2019 and ending July 31, 2022.
- Susan A. Block of Toledo (Lucas County), Juan P. Cespedes of Columbus (Franklin County) and William B. White of Marietta (Washington County) reappointed to the Ohio Arts Council for a term beginning July 2, 2019 and ending July 1, 2024.
- Christopher J. Ferruso of Westerville (Franklin County), Dale R. Arnold of Newark (Licking County), Kevin M. Murray of Dublin (Franklin County), and Shawn E. Nelson of Upper Arlington

(Franklin County) reappointed to the Public Benefits Advisory Board for a term beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2022.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearings opened Tuesday in the House Health Committee on Rep. Jena Powell's (R-Arcanum) resolution, HR180, which would declare pornography a public health hazard. In sponsor testimony, she linked pornography to the increase in sex trafficking and abuse of women and minors. She testified that, "Pornography is integral to prostitution and coerced sexual acts, and over half of sex trafficking victims report that they were required to learn and perform according to pornographic media. ... There is also a study ... from the *Northwestern University Law Review* discussing how human traffickers force those they have trafficked into pornographic videos as a way to entrap them. ... It is crucial to understand pornography as a form of violence against women. Mainstream pornography consists of socially-sanctioned acts of direct violence against women."

The head of the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) told House members Tuesday the board will begin asking licensees whether they ever have been investigated by an employer in order to correct the regulatory breakdown that allowed former Ohio State University (OSU) sports physician Richard Strauss to keep his job after sexual assault allegations triggered a university probe of the now-deceased doctor. With a separate SMBO report due at Gov. Mike DeWine's Strauss workgroup on Oct. 1, board Director A.J. Groeber told the House State and Local Government Committee that investigators are pursuing "known associates" of sex abusers for possible cover-up of colleague misconduct going forward.

INSURANCE

Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) Director Jillian Froment has been appointed to serve on the Federal Advisory Committee on Insurance (FACI). The committee provides advice and recommendations to the Federal Insurance Office (FIO).

JUDICIAL

The Board of Commissioners of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection has awarded \$192,025 to 15 victims of attorney theft in its latest reparations. Eight former or suspended Ohio attorneys were found to have misappropriated client funds, with claims also involving two deceased attorneys.

The task force appointed by Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor to review Ohio's disciplinary system proposed new sanctions for members of the bar Thursday including removal of judges who commit "serious, egregious misconduct," along with the medical, psychological or psychiatric examination of judges or lawyers who may be unfit to practice or serve on the bench. Its final report found "substantial room" to improve the disciplinary process for members of the Ohio Supreme Court, recommending new rules that would require the Board of Professional Conduct (BPC) to retain all confidential records of proceedings involving justices dismissed short of a formal complaint.

LIBRARIES

The Ohio Library Council echoed recent calls from national library organizations for large publishers to reverse course on limits to libraries' access to new e-books and e-audiobooks. The council's Board of Directors last week adopted a resolution asking Blackstone Audio, Hachette,

Macmillan and Simon & Schuster to reconsider policies that limit the number of copies of a book libraries can buy, require them to wait for months after the release of a book and charge libraries higher prices than consumers would pay. Columbus Metropolitan Library CEO Patrick Losinski was among library chiefs from across the U.S. who gathered in Tennessee recently to announce a campaign to push for greater access to e-books by libraries.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ray Briya, a member of the Youngstown State University Foundation and YSU Athletics Hall of Fame, awaits sentencing in the Mahoning County corruption probe implicating former Youngstown Mayor Charles Sammarone and former city finance director David Bozanich, who are still awaiting trial. Briya pled guilty last week to five felony charges, including two counts of attempted bribery (fourth-degree), one count of grand theft (fourth-degree), one count of tampering with records (fourth-degree) and one count of obstructing justice (fifth-degree) in a case handled by the Ohio Attorney General's Special Prosecutions section.

MARIJUANA/HEMP

There are now 57,589 patients registered under the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program (MMCP), according to the Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP). OBP on Monday released its patient and caregiver numbers for August. There were 53,082 patients registered in the program through July.

MEDICAID/MEDICAID REFORM

The Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) made up for lost time Thursday in its first meeting since December, hearing a broad overview of the health care program from Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) Director Maureen Corcoran and quizzing her on flashpoints like drug pricing, work requirements and enrollment trends.

PEOPLE

Ed Orlett, who served seven terms in the Ohio House of Representatives from Montgomery County from 1973 through 1986, died Aug. 22, 2019. He was 85. His funeral was Sept. 3 in Wheelersburg, OH.

STATE GOVERNMENT

A business that secured state contracts with the help of its minority-owned status actually served as a pass-through for more than \$12 million going to firms that were not minority-owned, Inspector General Randall Meyer's office said in an investigatory report Tuesday. Meyer's office said it learned of the matter during a separate investigation of the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' (DAS) contracting practices for information technology services.

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) recently unveiled an interactive map that makes information about the commission's cultural facilities grant projects more readily accessible to the public.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission approved three resolutions related to bridge and ramp repair and rehabilitation during its Monday meeting. The resolutions include deck replacement and ramp rehabilitation at various structures in Fulton, Lucas, Summit, Cuyahoga & Lorain counties.

The House Transportation and Public Safety Committee began hearings Tuesday on legislation that would create default regulations for low-speed electric scooters around the state, although the sponsor told the committee the bill would not supersede regulations adopted by local governments. Rep. Jim Hoops (R-Napoleon) said HB295 (Hoops) was in the House-passed version of HB62 (Oelslager), the transportation budget, but did not make the final version. He said the language had been carefully negotiated by low-speed electric scooter companies & organizations supporting local governments.

UTILITIES

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) set a hearing date for a New York-based energy company that has been sued in multiple states for deceptive marketing tactics and has settled in two for more \$10 million, culminating in a formal investigation launched by PUCO last spring. Responding to hundreds of complaints over several months, commission staff is basing full restitution and possible penalties on PALMCO's sale to new owners, but the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) says that could leave some customers out in the cold and reward bad behavior with potential profits. OCC wants to delay the hearing and allow more time to investigate PALMCO's real assets.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's (PUCO) new rules on net metering cleared the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) without in-person testimony or discussion among lawmakers on Monday.

American Electric Power (AEP) of Ohio had submitted written opponent testimony, arguing the rules violate several JCARR prongs. In a memo to committee members, JCARR Executive Director Larry Wolpert and his staff said the rules appeared to be lawful.

WORKFORCE

The Governor's Executive Workforce Board heard presentations Wednesday on localized initiatives addressing workforce challenges and discussed ways those successes could be replicated around Ohio. Lt. Gov. Husted also offered an update on budget-related workforce items, including \$30 million for TechCred programs and \$50 million for career centers and high schools to cover costs of credential tests.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:

SENATE:

PASSED BY SENATE

SB28 PROTECTION ORDER VIOLATION PENALTIES (Sen. Jay Hottinger) To increase the penalty that applies to the offense of violating a protection order under certain circumstances. Vote 33-0

HOUSE:

No legislative activity to report.