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**Week in Review**

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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**

With Ohio struggling to emerge from an opioid epidemic that continues to see higher overdose rates than the rest of the nation, Columbus officials joined U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) on Monday to highlight National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, Oct. 28.

Ohio is deploying a new tool in its fight against prescription drug abuse. The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy announced an upgrade to Ohio's prescription drug monitoring program, known as the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS), that will provide Ohio prescribers and pharmacists with advanced analytics and tools to promote patient safety and assist in clinical decision-making. The upgrade to OARRS, utilizing Appriss Health's NarxCare platform, offers several features, including scores that calculate a patient's possible risk of overdose and addiction, red flags to alert prescribers of a potential patient safety issue, interactive visualization of prescription data, a messaging option to communicate with other health care providers and the

ability to search for local addiction treatment providers. The new platform will be made available at no cost to all Ohio health care providers starting on Monday, Nov. 20.

In the best case scenario, Ohio only has the capacity to treat 20 to 40 percent of the population abusing or depending on opioids, according to a new report conducted by the C. William Swank Program in Rural-Urban Policy in Ohio State's Department of Agricultural, Environment and Development Economics. The report found that the annual total cost of opioid addiction, abuse and overdose deaths in Ohio ranges from \$6.6 billion to \$8.8 billion, with analysts noting that the cost is on par with the state's spending on K-12 education.

President Donald Trump declared a public health emergency on the opioid epidemic Thursday, saying the nation is going to "overcome addiction." The president did not issue a national emergency declaration, a step he previously suggested he'd take in August and which would have substantially freed federal funding to further address the epidemic. His commission, chaired by New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, had recommended either step according to media reports.

## **CORRECTIONS**

Ohio would return to the indeterminate sentencing structure it had before SB2 under bills aimed at keeping violent offenders in prison longer and changing the parole system that received their first hearings Wednesday. Sens. Kevin Bacon (R-Columbus) and Sean O'Brien (D-Cortland) gave joint sponsor testimony on SB201 and SB202, both part of a package dubbed the "Reagan Tokes Act," named after an Ohio State student who was raped and murdered earlier this year by a man who had recently been paroled and was on GPS monitoring.

## **EDUCATION**

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Paolo DeMaria Tuesday launched the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) SuccessBound initiative to bring Ohio's business and education partnerships together to engage and inspire students about career opportunities. Spurred by a \$2 million grant the state received earlier this year from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and JPMorgan Chase & Co., this initiative is intended to expand and improve career pathways for Ohio's students.

## **ELECTIONS 2017**

With two weeks to go before the Nov. 7 General Election, Secretary of State Jon Husted said an estimated 257,728 Ohio voters have requested absentee ballots, including 1,003 requests from military and overseas voters.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-Warrensville Heights) endorsed a "Yes" vote on Issue 2, the Drug Price Relief Act.

## **ELECTIONS 2018**

House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) said Tuesday that he is "seriously considering" running for state auditor in 2018 and will be making his decision in the coming weeks.

Rosenberger's joining the race would set up a primary with one of the members of his caucus -- Rep. Keith Faber (R-Celina), who announced his campaign in January.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- Former House Speaker William Batchelder endorsed Mike DeWine for governor.
- EMILY's List endorsed Kathleen Clyde for secretary of state.

## **EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT**

Ohio's unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in September, according to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), a slight decrease from 5.4 percent in August. The state added 10,500 jobs over the month, going from a revised 5,546,500 in August to 5,557,000 in September. The number of workers unemployed in Ohio in September was 305,000, down 6,000 from 311,000 in August, ODJFS said. The number of unemployed has increased by 21,000 in the past 12 months from 284,000. The September unemployment rate for Ohio increased from 5.0 percent in September 2016.

## **ENERGY**

With property setbacks continuing to depress wind farm investment in Northwest Ohio, the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) has announced a series of public meetings to be held in December for a proposed 1,100-acre solar field in Hardin County. If approved, the Hardin Solar Energy Facility would include multiple arrays of photovoltaic panels with a combined generating capacity of up to 150 megawatts (Mw).

## **FEDERAL**

Delaware County Prosecutor Carol O'Brien told multiple media outlets that she will run for the 12th Congressional District after U.S. Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-Columbus) resigns his seat. Tiberi announced Thursday that he will be leaving Congress by the end of January 2018 to become the next head of the Ohio Business Roundtable.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

The Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) convened briefly Monday to consider a full set of rules with just two more meetings scheduled before the end of the year. JCARR Chair Rep. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) said that agencies are busy filing rules ahead of the end of the year. He also said that the JCARR "bucket of invalidation," containing the names of agencies that are late in updating their rules that are up for a five-year review, would make an appearance at the next JCARR meeting.

The House Speaker's Task Force on Education and Poverty met Thursday to hear presentations on the importance of mentorship in student development and the impact that the state's pre-K education efforts are having -- or are failing to have -- on the youngest Ohioans.

## **GOVERNOR**

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Charles T. "Chip" McConville of Mt. Vernon (Knox County) to the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission for a term beginning Oct. 23, 2017, and ending Aug. 21, 2021.
- JoAnn M. LaGuardia of Poland (Mahoning County) reappointed to the Eastern Gateway Community College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Oct. 24, 2017, and ending Oct. 16, 2022.
- Sheriff Larry L. Sims of Springboro (Warren County) to the Ohio Criminal Sentencing Commission for a term beginning Oct. 25, 2017, and ending Aug. 21, 2021.

## **GUNS**

Concealed carry license holders would not have to immediately inform a law enforcement officer that they are carrying a weapon under legislation that cleared the Ohio House on Tuesday. Rep. Scott Wiggam (R-Wooster) said his HB142 would clear up the ambiguity in current law that he said is arbitrarily enforced and has led to some license holders getting charged just because they did not inform an officer of their weapon soon enough.

## **JUDICIAL**

Ohio's largest metropolitan areas are among 40 counties in the state that have yet to sign on to the prison diversion program funded in budget bill HB49 (R. Smith). The Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison (TCAP) program seeks to award counties whose courts elect not to send certain fifth-degree felons to state penitentiaries.

## **MARIJUANA**

The Ohio Department of Commerce (DOC) has released applications and instructions for medical marijuana processors. Applications will be accepted from Monday, Dec. 4, 2017 until Friday, Dec. 15, 2017, according to the Medical Marijuana Control Program's website.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Legislation increasing penalties for distracted driving is another step closer to landing on the governor's desk after senators unanimously reported HB95 (Hughes-Seitz) out of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee on Tuesday.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

Although "all testimony" was invited by the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee on Wednesday, no witnesses appeared to testify on the latest legislative efforts to reform the unemployment compensation system. House Speaker Pro Tempore Kirk Schuring (R-Canton) had unveiled HB382 and companion resolution HJR4 earlier this month, and offered sponsor testimony on the proposals last week.

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

Awaiting word on a recommendation for U.S. District Court judge, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Administrator/CEO Sarah Morrison discharged her current duties Thursday at

the bureau's monthly board of directors meeting. She spoke to emerging liability insurance issues around autonomous vehicles and acknowledged her district court nod by U.S. Sens. Rob Portman (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH). The board also approved the statutorily required actuarial analysis of BWC overhaul HB269 (Henne).

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:**

### **HOUSE:**

#### **PASSED BY HOUSE**

**HB142** NOTIFYING POLICE OF CONCEALED CARRY (Rep. Scott Wiggam, Rep. Glenn Holmes) To eliminate the requirement that a concealed handgun licensee notify a law enforcement officer that the licensee is carrying a concealed handgun when stopped.

*Vote 69-25*

**HB168** CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND REGISTRATION (Rep. Dick Stein) To modify duties of the Division of Real Estate in the Department of Commerce regarding cemetery registration, to specify cemetery owners must reasonably maintain cemeteries, to establish the Cemetery Grant Program, and to make an appropriation.

*Vote 91-3*

**HB194** LICENSE PLATE-MILITARY SERVICE (Rep. Terry Johnson, Rep. Hearcel Craig) To establish a program for the issuance of special license plates related to military service and awards.

*Vote 94-0*

**HB251** BOND AND OBLIGATION MATURATION (Rep. Dave Greenspan) To increase from five to ten years the maturity period of other political subdivision's bonds and obligations eligible for investment of a subdivision's interim moneys.

*Vote 94-0*

**SB3** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (Sen. Bill Beagle, Sen. Troy Balderson) To revise the laws governing the state's workforce development system, programs that may be offered by primary and secondary schools, certificates of qualification for employment, and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency, and to designate the first week of May as In-Demand Jobs Week.

*Vote 93-1*

### **SENATE:**

#### **PASSED BY SENATE**

**HB118** TAX COMPLAINT DISMISSAL (Rep. Derek Merrin) To expressly prohibit the dismissal of a property tax complaint for failure to correctly identify the property owner.

*Vote 32-0*

**SB127** WASTE COLLECTION VEHICLE PROTECTIONS (Sen. Frank LaRose) To require motor vehicle operators to take certain actions upon approaching a stationary waste collection vehicle collecting refuse on a roadside.

*Vote 32-0*

**SB139** UNIFORM ELECTRONIC LEGAL MATERIAL (Sen. Michael Skindell, Sen. John Eklund) To adopt the Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act.

*Vote 32-0*

#### **CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE AMENDMENTS**

**SB3** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (Sen. Bill Beagle, Sen. Troy Balderson) To revise the laws governing the state's workforce development system, programs that may be offered by primary and secondary schools, certificates of qualification for employment, and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency, and to designate the first week of May as In-Demand Jobs Week.

*Senate Does Concur, Vote 32-0*