



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

February 17, 2017

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

Attorney General Mike DeWine and Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) released 15 recommendations from the Ohio Joint Study Committee on Drug Use Prevention Education designed to reach children with “consistent, age-appropriate, evidence-based” drug messaging from the earliest years of learning. The stakes, they said, are the lives of children and future adults in every socio-economic group in the state.

AGRICULTURE

Sen. Cliff Hite (R-Findlay) continued the push for changes to the current agriculture use valuation (CAUV) formula in the wake of spiking farmland prices, reviving his proposal from last session to address concerns with the capitalization rate and lack of incentives for conservation practices. Hite's SB 36 is the same as his 131-SB246, which got four hearings in the previous General Assembly and was supported by the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF) and Ohio Farmers Union.

FY18-19 BUDGET

The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) announced the release of the simulations for its proposed redistribution of a portion of the Local Government Fund (LGF) based on capacity by counties, cities, tax-levying and non-income tax-levying villages and townships. Those tables can be found on OBM's FY18-19 budget website at <http://www.obm.ohio.gov/Budget/operating/fy18-19.aspx>.

CORRECTIONS

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) Director Gary Mohr lobbied the House Finance Committee Tuesday for a "paradigm shift" in correctional thinking to reallocate major dollars to community settings for low-level, non-violent offenders and to radically increase GED attainment -- what he called the single biggest predictor for successful reentry that avoids recidivism.

EDUCATION

State Board of Education members heard from Superintendent Paolo DeMaria and staff Monday on how Ohio plans to implement the new federal law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Much of the discussion and board members' questions focused on testing. DeMaria, senior adviser Colleen Grady and lead accountability official Chris Woolard presented an overview of Ohio's draft plan.

Charter schools would have more responsibility to keep track of students' addresses of residence under legislation proposed by Rep. Stephen Hambley (R-Brunswick), who says it's needed to ensure funding for charter students flows from the correct source.

Superintendent Paolo DeMaria faced the Joint Education Oversight Committee on Thursday to present the state's draft plan to implement the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The committee also announced plans for two hearings in March for others to offer feedback to the committee on the ESSA plan: 2:30 p.m.-4 p.m. Thursday, March 2; and 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Thursday, March 9.

Students who want to participate in the third year of College Credit Plus can begin the notification process for the 2017-18 school year now, the departments of education and higher education announced this week. Public high school students Wednesday could begin to notify their principal of their interest to participate, and must declare their intent to participate by April 1.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Companion bills aiming to modernize Ohio's banking laws received their first hearings on Tuesday, with lawmakers noting much of the current "antiquated" code has not received an update since the 1980s. HB 35 (Hughes) and SB 29 (Coley-Oelslager) seek to provide a more secure environment for Ohio consumers, bill sponsors told committees in each chamber.

GOVERNOR

Gov. John Kasich asked the General Assembly Monday to authorize moving the "State of the State" address to Sandusky on Tuesday, April 4, continuing his tradition of taking the annual speech out of Columbus.

The governor made the following appointments during the week:

- Terry L. Casey of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the State Personnel Board of Review for a term beginning Feb. 10, 2017 and ending Feb. 7, 2023.
- Jeffrey T. Caswell of New Albany (Franklin County) to the Board of Tax Appeals for a term beginning Feb. 10, 2017 and ending Feb. 8, 2023.
- Laura E. Kohler of New Albany (Franklin County) to the State Board of Education for a term beginning Feb. 10, 2017 and ending Dec. 31, 2020.
- William C. Taft of Wellsville (Columbiana County) to the Financial Planning and Supervision Commission of the village of Wellsville for a term beginning Feb. 16, 2017 and continuing at the pleasure of the governor.
- June Taylor of Beachwood (Cuyahoga County) has been designated to serve as chair of the Ohio Casino Control Commission. Commissioner Taylor was appointed to the commission in 2011 and reappointed in 2015. She will succeed Commissioner Jo Ann Davidson, who has reached her six-year term limit as chair. Davidson will continue to serve on the commission.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Former Rep. Barbara Sears, now director of the Ohio Department of Medicaid, on Thursday walked the members of the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) through the findings of the department's recently released report on the Medicaid Expansion population -- also referred to as "Group 8 beneficiaries." These are adults with income at or below 138 percent of poverty. She also previewed her upcoming testimony on the proposed FY18-19 Medicaid budget.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The Wittenberg University Board of Directors chose Michael Frandsen, current vice president for finance and administration at Oberlin College, as Wittenberg's new president. The decision came after a six-month search.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers (R-Columbus) was promoted to the rank of brigadier general by the Ohio National Guard (ONG). The Ohio National Guard noted that Stivers is the first general officer in the ONG in more than 100 years to concurrently serve as a member of Congress. He has served in the Ohio Army National Guard for over 30 years.

TAXATION

Reps. Greta Johnson (D-Akron) and Brigid Kelly (D-Columbus) picked up three Republican co-sponsors in Reps. Niraj Antani (Miamisburg), Michael Henne (Clayton) and Nino Vitale (Urbana) among the 20 co-sponsors as they reintroduced legislation in the Ohio House that would eliminate

the sales tax on feminine hygiene products. Specifically, HB 61 would exempt tampons "and other similar tangible personal property, the principal purpose of which is feminine hygiene in connection with the menstrual cycle."

TECHNOLOGY

Reps. Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) and Christina Hagan (R-Alliance) reintroduced their "DataOhio" transparency legislation that twice passed the Ohio House and which, they said, "seems to have inspired Gov. Kasich to follow suit with government data initiatives in his proposed budget."

TRANSPORTATION

Applying the 28-cent per gallon state motor fuel tax to compressed natural gas (CNG) would "cause great harm to the industry that is already facing headwinds," according to IGS Energy General Counsel Matthew White. During a hearing on the transportation budget, HB 26 (McColley), White told the House Finance Committee that the decreased price of diesel fuel and the expiring federal tax credit for CNG have made the environment more difficult for the alternative fuel.

UNIONS

Rep. John Becker (R-Cincinnati) reintroduced legislation that would allow public sector workers to opt out of union representation, saying it is only a matter of time before Ohio joins other states with so-called "right-to-work" laws. HB 53 will remove mandatory union membership requirements for public employees, but would also allow non-union employees to voluntarily make financial contributions to a union. Becker also said the legislation would free unions from the responsibility of representing non-union employees.

UTILITIES

Gov. John Kasich announced the appointment of Lawrence Friedeman, vice president of regulatory affairs and compliance for IGS Energy and former vice president of regulatory affairs for Vectren Retail LLC, to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) seat originally vacated by former Chairman Andre Porter and recently vacated by former Commissioner M. Howard Petricoff, who stepped aside in the face of pressure from the Ohio Senate. For the seat to be vacated by Commissioner Lynn Slaby in April, the governor appointed Daniel Conway, energy and telecommunications partner at Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur LLP in Columbus.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:

HOUSE

PASSED BY HOUSE

- HB4** COCAINE AMOUNTS DETERMINATION (Rep. Bob Cupp, Rep. John Rogers) To provide that in determining the amount of cocaine for trafficking and possession offenses, it also includes a compound, mixture, preparation, or substance containing cocaine, and to declare an emergency.

Vote 97-0, Emergency Clause 96-1

HB11 INCORPORATING FEDERAL REVENUE CHANGES (Rep. Gary Scherer) To expressly incorporate changes in the Internal Revenue Code since February 14, 2016, into Ohio law.

Vote 97-0

HB32 CASINO GAMBLING EMPLOYEES (Rep. Bill Seitz) To specify that the criminal penalty related to casino operators and employees participating in casino gaming applies at their casino facility or an affiliated casino facility.

Vote 94-3

SENATE

PASSED BY SENATE

SB25 PERRY COUNTY MUNICIPAL COURT (Sen. Jay Hottinger) To create the Perry County Municipal Court in New Lexington on January 1, 2018, to establish one full-time judgeship in that court, to provide for the nomination of the judge by petition only, to abolish the Perry County County Court on that date, to designate the Perry County Clerk of Courts as the clerk of the Perry County Municipal Court, and to provide for the election for the Perry County Municipal Court of one full-time judge in 2017.

Vote 33-0, Emergency Clause 33-0