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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.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Gov. John Kasich weighed in on the latest Senate version of a health care reform plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, saying it was “still unacceptable.” Kasich has been a vocal critic of the first plan that was introduced in the Senate as well as of the House-passed version, taking aim at the proposals’ effects on the Medicaid expansion allowed under the Affordable Care Act.

As Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and President Donald Trump have discussed a “repeal only” approach to the Affordable Care Act in the short term, U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), a critical GOP vote, said he wouldn’t support it if it happened, but didn’t expect it too either.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

The Ohio Attorney General (AG) opened the application period Wednesday for \$3 million in grants supporting the expansion of Drug Abuse Response Teams (DART) and Quick Response Teams (QRT) to fight the opioid epidemic in FY18-19. A provision of budget bill HB 49 (R. Smith), the grants will be awarded to local law enforcement agencies and must include a partnership with a treatment provider. Application materials can be found on the AG website at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/LawEnforcementGrants.

BALLOT ISSUES

Backers of a constitutional amendment addressing victims' rights have collected enough signatures and the issue will appear on the November ballot, Secretary of State Jon Husted's office said Monday. The proposal, named "Marsy's Law" after a California woman who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend, would put the rights of crime victims during the judicial process into the Ohio Constitution. Backers submitted 563,556 signatures last month, and Husted's office said 371,749 of those signatures were valid.

EDUCATION

Secretary of State Jon Husted's office is seeking guidance from the attorney general on how the shifting affiliations of school districts to educational service centers (ESCs) affect who stands for election to ESC boards. The issue, arising after statutory changes included in the FY12-13 biennial budget, HB 153 (Amstutz), also was the subject of discussion in the most recent budget deliberations.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) wants input on the kind of information stakeholders want to see included in the weekly EdConnection newsletter it sends out to educators across the state. Those interested can fill out a survey posted at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/879RRLJ>.

Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) filed notice last week that it's initiating another appeal, this time challenging a trial court's ruling on open meeting laws. The online charter school is going to the 10th District Court of Appeals in response to a decision from Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Guy Reece II rejecting ECOT's claims that the State Board of Education violated open meetings laws while deliberating the school's administrative appeal of enrollment and funding decisions.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) announced recently it has added 49 new industry-recognized credentials to guide career-based programs and help students prepare for in-demand jobs, based on input from companies and industries in the state. Earning an industry-recognized credential can be used to fulfill requirements for earning a high school diploma under Ohio law.

ELECTIONS 2018

New reports filed by federal candidates show the U.S. Senate race shaping up to be an expensive battle, while many U.S. House incumbents are sitting on large cash reserves. Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel, who is seeking a rematch with U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) in 2018, said that his campaign has raised \$1.7 million in the second quarter and has \$3.3 million on hand.

Mike Gibbons, a Cleveland banker who is seeking the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate in 2018, announced his campaign raised nearly \$700,000 since he entered the race in June. Gibbons' campaign said he raised \$690,000 in the second quarter fundraising period, which includes a \$200,000 personal loan. The campaign is reporting \$615,000 cash on hand. In other news, he announced that his campaign has hired consulting firm BrabenderCox to serve as media strategist.

Ohio Democratic Party Chairman David Pepper said he's excited about the party's current field of statewide candidates and wouldn't speculate on former Attorney General Richard Cordray's likelihood of wading into the gubernatorial race.

The following endorsements were made last week:

- Reps. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) and Tom Brinkman (R-Cincinnati) and Sen. Lou Terhar (R-Cincinnati) endorsed Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor for governor.

ENVIRONMENT

The Ohio EPA said the first transaction through the Ohio Materials Marketplace occurred. The service allows Ohio businesses, not-for-profits and government organizations to advertise and acquire potentially useful products and materials that might otherwise be destined for disposal in landfills.

Ohio EPA has issued the final version of the 2018 Program Management Plan for the Drinking Water Assistance Fund (DWAF). The fund provides financial and technical assistance for a variety of projects that improve or protect the quality of Ohio's drinking water.

FEDERAL

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced new policy and guidelines regarding the federal collection of assets seized by state or local law enforcement under state law. The changes come after Ohio enacted HB 347 (McColley-Brinkman) on civil asset forfeiture proceedings. The bill originally banned the practice by Ohio law enforcement but was later altered to revise the procedures used to take cash and property from criminal suspects who have not been charged.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

The Senate will consider overrides to Gov. John Kasich's veto items in the enacted two-year budget as part of the "normal course of business," according to Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) Wednesday. "We've got a couple of if-needed days in August, I anticipate we'll be here for one of those, and we'll be here several days in September," Obhof said.

GOVERNOR

Gov. John R. Kasich signed the following bills into law which become effective in 90 days:

- **HB63** (Hughes) which requires an additional prison term of six years for felonious assault if the offender also is convicted of a specification that charges that the offender used an accelerant in

committing the offense and that the harm caused by the violation resulted in a permanent, serious disfigurement or permanent, substantial incapacity and names the act's provisions "Judy's Law."

- **HB103** (Reineke) which modifies the composition and powers of the financial planning and supervision commission of a political subdivision that is in a state of fiscal emergency and clarifies the duties of that political subdivision.

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Lilia J. Perez-Chavolia, Ph.D., of Hilliard (Franklin County) reappointed to the Public Benefits Advisory Board for a term beginning July 14, 2017, and ending June 30, 2020.

- Betty Montgomery of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the Ohio Venture Capital Authority for a term beginning July 14, 2017, and ending Jan. 31, 2021.

- Joshua Thomas of Canal Winchester (Franklin County) as a student member on the University of Akron Board of Trustees for a term beginning July 14, 2017, and ending July 1, 2019.

- Jessica A. Peck of Valley City (Medina County) as a student member on the Kent State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning July 14, 2017, and ending May 16, 2019.

- Alberto Jones of Trotwood (Montgomery County) to serve as a student member on the University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees for a term beginning July 20, 2017, and ending May 13, 2019.

- Alex T. Boehnke of Columbus (Franklin County) appointed and Charles Dejonckheere of Cincinnati (Hamilton County), Jennifer G. Fenderbosch of Avon Lake, (Lorain County), Michael G. Dinneen of Worthington (Franklin County) and Kathryn A. Trent of Fayetteville (Brown County) reappointed to the Materials Management Advisory Council for terms beginning July 20, 2017, and ending July 1, 2020.

HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS

The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) Board announced the recipients of the 2017 Housing Tax Credit (HTC) program awards, which are used to fund the construction, acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing communities throughout Ohio. Nearly \$26 million in federal housing tax credits was awarded to 33 developments to create 1,698 housing units serving families, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

MARIJUANA

Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights) introduced a resolution urging Congress and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to reclassify marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act. Reclassification would increase research into marijuana's effects and ease the burden on legal medical marijuana businesses, Yuko's office said in announcing SCR 13.

PEOPLE

Former state Rep. Gene Krebs chose last Tuesday's Ohio Consumers' Counsel Governing Board meeting to announce his resignation as board chairman in order to seek unspecified elective office in 2018. Krebs, of Camden in Preble County, would not say whether he is running for the General Assembly or another branch of state, local or county government. Vice Chairman Michael Watkins will take over as chair. Also leaving the board are Sally Hughes and Fred Yoder, who both have served since 2011 and chose not to seek another term.

PUBLIC SAFETY

New drivers are now able to test their virtual skills before getting behind the wheel of an actual vehicle, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) announced Thursday. Ohio is the first state to begin piloting portable driver simulator systems (PDSS) for safety screening and skill diagnostics prior to road tests, according to the bureau. Transportation budget bill HB 53 (Grossman) provided \$450,000 in each fiscal year to purchase the simulators.

The National Safety Council (NSC) recently graded all 50 states' safety policies and practices in a new report, giving Ohio a D and a 38th ranking in the nation. The lengthy report analyzed specific policies and practices in the areas of workplace safety, driving safety and home and community safety to grade each state, and according to the NSC, every state has some room for improvement. No state received an A, and only eight states received a B.

TECHNOLOGY

A representative of one of the world's largest cybersecurity firms told an advisory board formed by Attorney General Mike DeWine that ransomware attacks have been increasing and will likely continue to go up, especially in the United States because victims here are more likely to pay the demands of attackers.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:

SENATE:

No Senate activity to report.

HOUSE:

No House activity to report.