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Week in Review
July 25, 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.

AGRICULTURE

Jack Irvin has been named senior director of state and national policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF), the organization announced. He will be responsible for managing the organization's legislative and regulatory team and will represent the interests of farm bureau members with Congress, the General Assembly and with federal and state regulatory agencies, OFBF said.

FY18-19 BUDGET

The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) issued the budget guidance for state agencies to follow in developing their proposed budgets for Fiscal Years (FY) 2018 and 2019 -- Gov. John Kasich's final budget in office. The guidance directs agencies to base their FY18 and FY19 budget

requests on 90 percent of their adjusted FY17 appropriations "with the ability to request up to 10 percent in extended funding."

EDUCATION

Starting next month, the Ohio Department of Education will travel to 10 sites around the state to convene stakeholder meetings on preparations for sweeping changes in federal education laws. In the nearer term, the department also plans a series of webinars on how the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), successor to the No Child Left Behind Act, addresses various topics in the education system.

A study committee on how to measure dropout recovery and prevention (DOPR) schools laid out broad principles last week for what could constitute quality but wants a successor workgroup to meet over the next several months to get deeper into the issues.

ELECTIONS 2016

Citing increasing costs and concerns about security, Wright State University announced that it would not be hosting the first presidential debate scheduled for Sept. 26. The Commission on Presidential Debates said that the debate will now be held at Hofstra University in New York. The university said that it had expected to pay anywhere from \$3 million to \$8 million to host the debate.

FEDERAL

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced last week that it is awarding \$3.4 million to Ohio metropolitan housing authorities to assist low-income Ohio residents with job training and employment opportunities. The award is among \$75 million awarded nationally as part of a program to connect residents with services to further their education, find good jobs and set them on the path to self-sufficiency.

GOVERNOR

The governor made the following appointments during the week:

- Dale R. Arnold of Newark (Licking County) and Shawn E. Nelson of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the Public Benefits Advisory Board for terms beginning July 18, 2016, and ending June 30, 2019.
- Jill R. Pugh of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors for a term beginning July 19, 2016 and ending June 30, 2018.
- Thomas E. Price of Delaware (Delaware County) reappointed to the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission for a term beginning July 19, 2016 and ending June 30, 2020.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Earlier this month, the Ohio Departments of Medicaid (ODM) and Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) announced another revision to the implementation schedule for the Behavioral Health Redesign. According to the departments, "The coding changes, previously slated to begin Jan. 1, 2017, will now begin July 1, 2017 without a voluntary transition period. The deadline for final transition remains unchanged; all Medicaid behavioral health providers must submit claims using the new behavioral health code set effective July 1, 2017."

HOUSING

June home sales reached their highest levels since the Ohio Association of Realtors started tracking data in 1998, with quarterly sales up several points compared to last year. June saw 150,880 transactions, 5.4 percent above the 143,196 sales seen the same month of 2015. The average price of \$178,592 is 3.9 percent higher than last year's figures. June sales were 0.7 percent higher than May's.

INSURANCE

Ohio joined seven states, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia Thursday in antitrust claims against the proposed merger of Aetna and Humana Health Plan of Ohio, one of two lawsuits targeting "Big 5" health insurers that are being led by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). A second suit, to which Ohio is not a party, opposes the proposed merger of Anthem and Cigna.

POLITICS/NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The Republican National Convention took place last week in Cleveland as Donald Trump formally accepted the GOP nomination. In his acceptance speech, Trump characterized himself as the voice of the American people and a candidate who will return law and order to a nation in the throes of a "moment of crisis."

SECRETARY OF STATE

Secretary of State Jon Husted said that 8,480 new entities filed to do business in Ohio during June 2016. This is an increase over June 2015, when 8,151 entities were formed.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

Legislators have recessed for the summer.