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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**

The House Speaker's Task Force on Heroin, Opioids, Prevention, Education, and Safety (H.O.P.E.S.) made a stop in Columbus on Tuesday to invite input from professionals at Ohio State University (OSU), Franklin County and the greater Columbus community. This was the sixth roundtable held by the roving group, which has recently visited Wright State University near Dayton, Summa Health in Akron and the Center for Addiction Treatment in Cincinnati. Rep. Robert Sprague (R-Findlay) who chairs the task force, conducted the meeting informally, asking for personal and professional experiences regarding the state's opioid abuse and overdose epidemic.

Ohio Third Frontier hit its launch date Wednesday for the \$8 million Opioid Technology Challenge, the second piece of technology drug funding introduced in Gov. John Kasich's 2017 "State of the State" speech. As the state moves toward final awards for existing opioid applications, the challenge program is now accepting proposals for new technologies in the treatment of opioid addiction.

## **AGRICULTURE**

The next round of harmful algal bloom (HAB) reduction funding is now available through the federal Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODAg) announced Monday. The funding is part of a five-year, \$17.5 million program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

## **CORRECTIONS**

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) employees are passionate about reducing recidivism by providing inmates access to education and jobs, department officials told the Small Business Advisory Council (SBAC) on Wednesday. Jessica Dennis, DRC deputy director of programming, development and evaluation, said the department provides access to literacy courses, pre-GED courses, GED courses, college courses, career technical education and apprenticeships. She said offering these programs not only improves inmate conduct in prison, but reduces recidivism by preparing released offenders to attain and keep employment.

## **EDUCATION**

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) plans to re-release state report cards for career-technical districts later this month after finding a "systemic data compilation error." The error excluded "a small number of students" from calculations for the Graduation Rate, Prepared for Success and Nontraditional Participation measures, according to department spokesperson Brittany Halpin.

## **ELECTIONS 2018**

Rep. Dorothy Pelanda (R-Marysville) announced Monday that she will be exiting the secretary of state's race, clearing the way for Sen. Frank LaRose (R-Copley) to secure the Republican nomination.

Franklin County Auditor Clarence Mingo said Tuesday that he is ending his campaign for treasurer. In a letter to supporters, Mingo said that "time and resources will not allow the momentum needed to continue this movement forward successfully." Mingo said he will instead run for re-election to the county auditor's office, and backed Rep. Robert Sprague (R-Findlay) for the nomination.

Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor outlined plans Monday to create a more business-friendly state government structure which she said will build upon the principles of the Common Sense Initiative (CSI). Taylor said the new structure will create a comprehensive and coordinated strategy among business-facing agencies such as the departments of taxation, environmental protection, workers' compensation, transportation and commerce.

Dayton Mayor and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Nan Whaley made an appearance in Xenia on Wednesday to reiterate her stance against drug distribution companies that she said fueled the ongoing opioid abuse and overdose epidemic. Whaley said that, as governor, she would implement a nickel per dose surcharge that opioid manufacturers would pay. She said that such a policy could generate as much as \$31.5 million to fight the epidemic each year.

Rep. Anne Gonzales (R-Westerville) announced she will run for the Ohio Senate in 2018, seeking to replace Sen. Kevin Bacon (R-Columbus), who is term-limited. Gonzales is currently serving in her final term in the Ohio House. She cannot seek another term in the House due to term limits.

Michael Canty will run for the 6th House District seat in 2018, the Cleveland businessman told other members of the Small Business Advisory Council (SBAC) on Wednesday. The Alloy Bellows and Precision Welding Inc. president and CEO is seeking to replace fellow Republican Rep. Marlene Anielski (Walton Hills), who is term-limited.

Rep. Andrew Brenner (R-Powell) said Thursday that he is planning to run for the 19th Ohio Senate District in 2018 and is not interested in running for Congress. The Senate seat is currently held by Sen. Kris Jordan (R-Powell), who is term limited. Brenner said he has been asked about running for Congress in the wake of U.S. Rep. Pat Tiberi's announcement that he is leaving next year, but said he has already told the Delaware County Republican Central Committee his Senate intentions.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- U.S. Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-Columbus) endorsed Kathleen Clyde for secretary of state.
- Former Ohio Attorney General Betty Montgomery endorsed Frank LaRose for secretary of state.
- The American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio announced opposition to Issue 1, the crime victims' amendment also known as Marsy's Law, saying the issue "threatens the fundamental rights of the accused in the criminal justice system."
- The Ohio AFL-CIO endorsed Sherrod Brown for re-election to the U.S. Senate.
- The Cleveland Police Patrolmen's Association endorsed Josh Mandel for U.S. Senate.

## **FEDERAL**

U.S. Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-Columbus) announced Thursday that he's leaving Congress to become president and CEO of the Ohio Business Roundtable.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

Former Sen. Cliff Hite (R-Findlay) on Wednesday apologized for improper interactions with a female state employee, admitting that situation played a major role in his decision to resign on Monday. "I'm not proud of recent inappropriate conversations that I had with a state employee who did not work for me but worked in a nearby state office. After we met, I sometimes asked her for hugs and talked with her in a way that was not appropriate for a married man, father, and grandfather like myself," Hite said in a statement. He also said he has been ill for the last year and doesn't have the strength to continue to travel from home to the Statehouse.

When asked about the Hite resignation, Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) said all members of the Senate will soon be required to receive training on sexual harassment.

Obhof later in the week announced the process for filing Hite's vacant seat, with applications due by 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6.

The Senate Wednesday overwhelmingly passed legislation allowing business owners using a professional employer organization (PEO) to be eligible for the business income tax deduction adopted in the 130th General Assembly, though some Democrats said they want to see the deduction

itself addressed. Sen. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina), the sponsor of SB186, called the legislation "a simple little tax bill" that he says clarifies existing law and came out of interested party meetings between business owners and the Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT).

In other action, the Senate unanimously passed SB143 (Eklund), designating Sept. 25 as "International Ataxia Awareness Day" in Ohio and SB169 (Wilson-Eklund), which addresses the sale of travel insurance.

## **GOVERNOR**

Gov. John Kasich signed three bills Thursday:

- HB6 (Barnes), under which a publisher will not be allowed to solicit or accept payments in exchange for removing, correcting, modifying or refraining from publishing criminal record information.
- HB94 (Sykes-Perales), which designates February as "Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month."
- SB27 (Beagle), which designates the period beginning March 13 and ending April 15 as "Ohio Deaf History Month."

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Neil J. Giering of Garfield Hts. (Cuyahoga County) reappointed to the Board of Building Appeals for a term beginning Oct. 13, 2017, and ending Oct. 13, 2021.
- Donald B. Leach, Jr. of Columbus (Franklin County), Terence M. McCafferty of Seven Hills (Cuyahoga County), Donald R. McIlroy of Circleville (Pickaway County), Christopher L. Miller of Dublin (Franklin County), John N. Pavlis of North Canton (Stark County), Carl Schultz of Delaware (Delaware County), and A. Bailey Stanbery of Toledo (Lucas County) reappointed to the Board of Building Standards for terms beginning Oct. 14, 2017, and ending Oct. 13, 2021.
- Lisa Haberbusch of Wooster (Wayne County) and Erin Michel of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board for terms beginning Oct. 13, 2017, and ending Oct. 10, 2020.
- Ronald F. Budzik of Centerville (Montgomery County) and Richard Sadlier of Dayton (Montgomery County) reappointed to the Sinclair Community College Board of Trustees for terms beginning Oct. 13, 2017, and ending Oct. 12, 2022.
- Amy E. Barker of Centerville (Montgomery County) reappointed to the Sinclair Community College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Oct. 16, 2017, and ending Oct. 12, 2022.
- Margaret Knerr of Powell (Franklin County) reappointed to the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board for a term beginning Oct. 16, 2017, and ending Oct. 10, 2020.
- Christin M. Jungers, Ph.D. of Steubenville (Jefferson County) reappointed to the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board for a term beginning Oct. 17, 2017, and ending Oct. 10, 2020.
- Deborah Allen of Granville (Licking County) to the State Auctioneers Commission for a term beginning Oct. 17, 2017 and ending Oct. 9, 2019.
- Vanessa L. Stallkamp, M.D. of Lima (Allen County) to the Maternity and Newborn Advisory Council for a term beginning Nov. 1, 2017, and ending Oct. 31, 2022.
- Daniel L. Frobose of Pemberville (Wood County) to the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board for a term beginning Oct. 18, 2017, and ending Jan. 25, 2020.

- Amy L. Francis of Hubbard (Trumbull County) and Cynthia A. Gensamer of Massillon (Stark County) to the Board of Executives of Long-term Services and Supports for terms beginning Oct. 18, 2017, and ending May 27, 2020.
- William "B.J." Nurczyk, Jr. of Steubenville (Jefferson County) reappointed to the Eastern Gateway Community College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Oct. 19, 2017, and ending Oct. 16, 2022.
- Michael J. Scharfenberger of Cincinnati (Hamilton County) to the Board of Executives of Long-term Services and Supports for a term beginning Oct. 19, 2017, and ending May 27, 2020.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Members of the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) relayed concerns about readiness and beta testing standards in the Behavioral Health Redesign Initiative (BHRI) to Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) Director Barbara Sears and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) Director Tracy Plouck Thursday.

## **MARIJUANA**

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) has released a request for proposals (RFP) to provide a medical marijuana toll-free telephone hotline. The board is required by law to establish a hotline to respond to patients, caregivers and health professionals regarding "adverse reactions" to medical marijuana. According to the RFP, the hotline would be operational Monday-Friday from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. The contractor would also be required to provide web resources on medical marijuana.

## **TAXATION**

Tax Commissioner Joe Testa was the lone sponsor Tuesday at the first meeting of the latest group charged with studying Ohio's tax expenditures -- more popularly known as "tax loopholes." Led by Sen. Scott Oelslager (R-Canton) and including Sens. John Eklund(R-Chardon) and Vern Sykes (D-Akron) and Reps. Tim Schaffer (R-Lancaster), Gary Scherer (R-Circleville) and John Rogers (D-Mentor-on-the-Lake), this committee was pointed to by the 2020 Tax Policy Study Commission as key in the state's potential move toward a flat tax.

Ohio Tax Commissioner Joe Testa on Thursday encouraged business taxpayers "that want to cut the cost of reporting and filing municipal tax" to sign up for a new service provided by the department. Registration is now available at the Ohio Department of Taxation's (ODT) website ([www.tax.ohio.gov](http://www.tax.ohio.gov)) for business taxpayers seeking to opt-in for centralized filing and state administration of the municipal net profit tax for the 2018 tax year, the department said in a news release. Taxpayers can register either electronically or by filling out and submitting a paper registration form.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Fifty miles of roadside on the Ohio Turnpike will soon be equipped with radio units that can communicate with state vehicles. The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission (OTIC) on Monday approved a nearly \$1.5 million contract with Logicalis Inc. to provide a vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications network.

The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission also approved a resolution creating a memorial sign program honoring those killed while working on the Ohio Turnpike.

## **UTILITIES**

House members got up to speed Tuesday on the latest round of legislation aimed at the resale of electricity at marked up prices to residents of multi-family units -- otherwise known as sub-metering. Companion legislation HB249 (Duffey) and SB157 (Bacon) have revived the push to regulate Nationwide Energy Partners (NEP) and other sub-metering companies after legislation was first introduced in the 130th General Assembly.

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:**

### **HOUSE:**

*No House activity to report.*

### **SENATE:**

#### **PASSED BY SENATE**

**SB143** DAY DESIGNATION-ATAXIA AWARENESS (Sen. John Eklund) To designate September 25 as "International Ataxia Awareness Day" in Ohio.

*Vote 32-0*

**SB169** TRAVEL INSURANCE SALE OVERSIGHT (Sen. Steve Wilson, Sen. John Eklund) To oversee the sale of travel insurance.

*Vote 32-0*

**SB186** BUSINESS INCOME CLASSIFICATION (Sen. Bob Peterson) To provide that wages and guaranteed payments paid by a professional employer organization to the owner of a pass-through entity that has contracted with the organization may be considered business income.

*Vote 30-2*