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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**

Three major distributors and one drug maker, Distributors Amerisource Bergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson and manufacturer Teva Pharmaceuticals, agreed Monday to a \$260 million settlement with Cuyahoga and Summit counties, averting a federal trial that was to start the same day to litigate the local governments' claims that the firms helped to fuel the opiate addiction epidemic.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Attorney General Dave Yost's office Friday released a statement saying a television commercial's use of his remarks at a Sept. 30 press conference highlighting concerns about tactics being used for and against a potential referendum on HB6 (Callender-Wilkin), the nuclear plant bailout bill, was done so "without his knowledge or consent." Yost's office said that he has deliberately not taken a position on the merits of the law, during the legislative debate or following its passage, "as he anticipated it would be litigated."

Ohio will receive \$39.4 million from a \$700 million multi-state settlement with drug distributor Reckitt Benckiser Group, accused of improperly marketing of Suboxone and spurring false claims to government health care programs between 2010-2014. The drug Suboxone is approved for use by recovering opioid addicts to reduce withdrawal symptoms while undergoing treatment. Its active ingredient, buprenorphine, is itself a "powerful and addictive" opioid, according to the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

## **BALLOT ISSUES**

The Ohio Supreme Court has been asked to settle a dispute between powerful and well-funded forces on either side of the energy subsidy petition after a federal court in Columbus Wednesday denied anti-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) organizers more time to collect 266,000 valid signatures needed to make the 2020 ballot. Judge Edmund Sargus did not say Ohioans Against Corporate Bailouts' attack on state referendum laws was not well founded but that it had directed its complaint to the wrong court. Sargus acknowledged that the street-level battle between pro- and anti-HB6 opponents had become "one of the most expensive and divisive campaigns in Ohio history" but also that the jurisdiction of the federal court system "is not defined by the scope of the issues raised in this highly public, bitter debate."

This followed a series of developments over the week concerning the referendum on HB6 which began on Monday when backers missed Monday's filing deadline and instead looked to the federal court to give them more time to try to make the ballot -- an unprecedented legal challenge to the constitutionality of Ohio's decades-old petition process.

The hearing on the challenge occurred on Tuesday with anti-HB6 attorneys for Ohioans Against Corporate Bailouts not only arguing whether the "fair and truthful" summary of a targeted law required for petitioners to go to work violates Ohioans' access to "core political speech" but also redoubling the claim that the well-funded campaign to defeat the referendum had violated the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. Petition organizers added "tortious interference" to that charge.

Meanwhile, opponents of that referendum claimed to have filed more than 800,000 signatures on a petition to the General Assembly urging protection of Ohio energy generation from the influence or control of foreign corporations or governments. Rep. Jamie Callender (R-Concord), a sponsor of HB6, said he expects something along those lines to be introduced this week.

## **BUSINESS/CORPORATE**

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) reminded members that companies have until Thursday, Oct. 31 to apply for reimbursements of up to \$2,000 per credential and employee under the new "TechCred" program. Employers can receive up to \$30,000 total in the first funding round, and the program was allocated \$30 million over the biennium to encourage providing current or new employees with training to receive industry-recognized credentials

## **CIVIL RIGHTS**

While representation of the LGBTQ community in public office rose 25 percent from just 2018 to 2019, there is more work yet to be done to increase representation and equality among elected officials, current and former elected officials told a Columbus Metropolitan Club (CMC) audience

Friday. Annise Parker, president and CEO of the LGBTQ Victory Institute and the former mayor of Houston, joined Columbus officials Shannon Hardin, president of Columbus City Council, and Megan Kilgore, Columbus city auditor, on the panel hosted by Mary Jo Hudson, a partner at Squire Patton Boggs, former Columbus school board member and director of the Ohio Department of Insurance. All are openly gay.

## **DISABILITIES**

Judge Edmund A. Sargus, Jr., of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio recently granted preliminary approval to a comprehensive settlement agreement in the class action *Ball v. DeWine*, that was filed by Disability Rights Ohio (DRO) and others in March 2016 on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities and the Ability Center of Greater Toledo against the state of Ohio, the departments of developmental disabilities and Medicaid, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), and the Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (OACBDD). Under the agreement, the Department of Developmental Disabilities will continue and expand programs to allow more people with developmental disabilities the option to live and work in their communities with the supports they need. The department will provide \$24 million in capital housing assistance for FY19 and FY20, to be primarily available for people receiving exit, diversion or conversion waivers.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) announced Monday the expansion of the Ohio Transition Support Partnership (OTSP) which supports students with disabilities by helping them gain the skills needed for future careers. The expansion was included in the biennial budget and provides approximately 270 additional students with disabilities in Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton counties with individualized transition services over the next year. The partnership will target an additional 360 students with disabilities statewide in the 2020-2021 school year.

## **EDUCATION**

Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) made his three appointments Monday to the study committee on state report cards established in the budget bill, following Speaker Larry Householder's (R-Glenford) earlier appointments. Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering) and Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport) will serve by dint of their respective chairmanships of the standing education committees in the General Assembly.

Obhof also appointed Sens. Louis Blessing III (R-Cincinnati) and Teresa Fedor (D-Toledo) to the committee while Householder appointed Rep. Tracy Richardson (R-Marysville) and Rep. Lisa Sobecki (D-Toledo). Superintendent Paolo DeMaria or his designee also will serve on the committee.

Two House lawmakers explained their push Tuesday for an official state definition of a school counselor's role, with counselors joining them to explain how administrative tasks eat up their schedules at a time when stressed and traumatized students need their help more than ever. Reps. Susan Manchester (R-Lakeview) and Jessica Miranda (D-Cincinnati) said their HB367 would direct the Ohio Department of Education to develop an official job description for school counselors and to designate a liaison for counselors within the department.

House Finance Committee Chair Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton) said Thursday he'll seek to break discussion of the latest Cupp-Patterson school funding proposal into pieces so members can dig deeply into each component at separate hearings. He said such "targeted dialogue" has proven effective in weighing other complex legislation in his experience as a legislative chairman. After an introduction of HB305 last week by Reps. Robert Cupp (R-Lima) and John Patterson (D-Jefferson), the committee heard testimony from Akron Schools Treasurer Ryan Pendleton and Perrysburg Schools Superintendent Thomas Hosler on the proposal's base-cost calculations on Thursday.

## **ELECTIONS 2020**

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles) announced Thursday that he will no longer seek the Democratic nomination for president and will instead run to retain his seat in Congress.

Alaina Shearer announced Wednesday that she will run for the Democratic nomination for the 12th Ohio Congressional District in 2020. The seat is currently held by U.S. Rep. Troy Balderson (R-Zanesville), who is expected to run for re-election. Shearer is a graduate of Ohio University's E.W. Scripps School of Journalism and has worked as a reporter and news anchor for WTVN and WNCI.

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) increased her lead among other candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination, according to post-debate national polling released Thursday by Quinnipiac University.

## **EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT**

Ohio's unemployment rate was 4.2 percent in September 2019, up from 4.1 percent in August, according to new figures released Friday by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) as the state's nonagricultural wage and salary employment decreased 1,500 over the month, from a revised 5,592,700 in August to 5,591,200 in September 2019. ODJFS said the number of workers unemployed in Ohio in September was 243,000, up 5,000 from 238,000 in August. The number of unemployed has decreased by 20,000 in the past 12 months from 263,000. The September unemployment rate for Ohio decreased from 4.6 percent in September 2018.

## **FEDERAL**

President Donald Trump should be impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, former Gov. John Kasich said Friday. Kasich, a Republican, said White House Acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney's admission that military aid to Ukraine was withheld -- at least partly -- for partisan political purposes pushed him "across the Rubicon."

Benjamin Glassman, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, announced he will resign on Friday, Nov. 1. Glassman will be replaced by Trump administration appointee David DeVillers after he is officially confirmed by the U.S. Senate, which is expected to occur soon. Both U.S. Sens. Rob Portman (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) praised the nomination of DeVillers in August.

## **GAMING/GAMBLING**

The Ohio Casino Control Commission recently approved a renewal of an operating license for the Hollywood Casino Toledo. The commission also approved a holding company license for Penn National Gaming after the company acquired Pinnacle, a company that owns a service center that provides support services to a number of Penn National properties including those in Ohio.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

Among a multitude of committee changes announced Friday by Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford), Rep. Don Jones (R-Freeport) was named chairman of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee. Rep. Susan Manchester (R-Waynesfield) was named vice-chair.

Sen. Nathan Manning (R-North Ridgeville) is the new chairman of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, and Sen. Andrew Brenner (R-Powell) is the new chairman of the Senate Finance Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee, Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) announced Monday. The leadership posts were part of a long list of new committee assignments following recent resignations and appointments.

Witnesses told the Senate Judiciary Committee that Ohio has a duty to act when it comes reining in large online tech platforms such as Google and Facebook that they said are limiting competition. The committee held a field hearing outside of Columbus, traveling to Cleveland State University to discuss antitrust issues. Six witnesses submitted testimony on the subject.

Returning House member, Rep. Diane Grendell (R-Chesterland), who served in the General Assembly prior to being appointed a judge on the Ohio 11<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals, told *Hannah News* she returned because she loves helping people. She replaced former Rep. Sarah LaTourette (R-Chesterland) who joined the DeWine administration earlier this year.

Addressing abuse of the justice system is a key motivation of his work in office, Sen. Matt Huffman (R-Lima) said Tuesday at a press conference, and his SB215 will increase protections for the news media and others against meritless defamation lawsuits.

The Ohio Senate on Wednesday passed the following bills: amusement ride safety bill HB189 (Patterson-Blessing), sending it, tax omnibus bill SB26 (Kunze) and the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Task Force bill SB24 (Wilson) on to the governor for his signature. It also passed SR376 (Obhof) which urges Congress to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada [Trade] Agreement; SB58 (Gavarone) which frees up more psychiatric hospital beds; SB59 (Antonio) which permits pharmacists to dispense naloxone without a prescription; SB89 (M. Huffman) which makes changes to the career technical education laws; and Maternal Mortality Awareness Month bill SB151 (Maharath).

The Ohio House Wednesday passed the following four bills: HB65 (Carfagna) requiring parental notification of any day care center investigations; HB117 (Upchurch) designating Aug. 31 as "Frank Robinson Day"; HB295 (Hoops) regulating electric scooters; and SB5 (Kunze-Dolan) regarding prostitution enforcement.

The House Federalism Committee voted Wednesday to approve HCR11 (Keller-Kick), which would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, following testimony from one opponent and one proponent of the measure.

The House narrowly passed legislation Thursday to change the way ballot language describes the cost of tax levies to voters, seeking to revive a proposal Gov. Mike DeWine struck from the biennial budget with a line-item veto. Rep. Derek Merrin (R-Monclova) said his HB76 would help voters to better assess the cost of a tax levy to them by expressing the expense per \$100,000 in market value of their homes, instead of the current practice of expressing it per \$100 of taxable value.

Also splitting the chamber Thursday was HB209, which passed 61-32 despite general support for its underlying concept: abolition of dower in Ohio property law. Reps. Sara Carruthers (R-Hamilton) and Darrell Kick (R-Loudonville) said the outdated concept of dower dates to a time when women couldn't own property and was meant to protect widows under a defunct system where property flowed to the oldest heir. In modern times, it serves mostly to snarl otherwise straightforward real estate transactions, or as a tool for abusers to exert control over their partners.

The House voted unanimously Thursday to pass SB7 (Lehner-Hackett), which would require state professional licensing agencies to give temporary credentials to active duty military service members and their spouses who relocate to Ohio. Also passing Thursday was HB119 (Stoltzfus), which clarifies the law on distracted driving offenses. Previous provisions on traffic cameras were removed after their inclusion in the transportation budget. The bill passed 91-2.

In other action, the House Health Committee reported out HB108 (Patterson) designating June 30 as "Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita Awareness Day"; the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee reported out bridge designation bill HB332 (Riedel), license plate bill HB344 (Howse) and highway designation HB353 (D. Manning); the House Ways and Means Committee reported out HB197 (Powell-Merrin) which makes technical and corrective changes to Ohio's tax code; the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee reported out HB155 (Schaffer-Rogers) addressing war relic preservation; the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee reported out SB192 (Craig) which addresses the designation of Poindexter Village as a state historic site; and the House Higher Education Committee reported out SB120 (McColley-Rulli) which authorizes the state auditor to conduct performance audits of state higher education institutions.

## **GOVERNOR**

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- George R. Berlin of Canfield (Mahoning County) and Richard H. McClelland of Zanesville (Muskingum County) reappointed to the Ohio Standardbred Development Commission for terms beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2023.
- Lori M. Steiner of Dublin (Franklin County) to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency for a term beginning Dec. 1, 2019 and ending Jan. 31, 2021.
- Carolyn Peters of Dayton (Montgomery County) and Jeremy Morris of Reynoldsburg (Franklin County) reappointed to the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council for terms beginning June 2, 2019 and ending June 1, 2022.

- Peter J. Moore of Pataskala (Licking County) to the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council for a term beginning Oct. 18, 2019 and ending June 1, 2020.

- David Baker of Columbus (Franklin County), Andrea N. Kramer of Findlay (Hancock County) and Alison McKay of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council for terms beginning October 18, 2019, and ending June 1, 2022.

- James R. Fowler of Columbus (Franklin County) and Matthew J. Borges of Bexley (Franklin County) to the Columbus State Community College Board of Trustees for terms beginning Oct. 18, 2019 and ending Aug. 31, 2025.

- Darrell L. McNair of Aurora (Portage County) to the Northeast Ohio Medical University Board of Trustees for a term beginning Oct. 18, 2019 and ending Sept. 21, 2028.

- Paul B. Glock of Dublin (Franklin County) to the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council for a term beginning Oct. 18, 2019 and ending March 14, 2021.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) has issued disciplinary hearing notices to Mount Carmel West Hospital and three pharmacists for violations related to the alleged actions of Dr. William Husel, who has been charged with 25 counts of murder for overprescribing the powerful opioid fentanyl.

The Ohio Affiliate of Prevent Blindness warned against wearing decorative contact lenses as part of Halloween costumes. The organization said contact lenses are medical devices and are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. The FDA states that contact lenses are not over-the-counter (OTC) devices and companies that sell them as such are misbranding the device and violating Federal Trade Commission (FTC) regulations by selling contact lenses without having a valid prescription.

The Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) considers HB144 (D. Manning) "unnecessary legislation," according to testimony by OHA Vice President of Quality Programs James Guliano in the House Commerce and Labor Committee Wednesday. The bill would prohibit hospitals from requiring registered nurses or licensed practical nurses work overtime as a condition of continued employment, but Guliano said existing state laws require safe staffing plans developed with 50 percent staff nurse representation and development of consideration criteria including patient acuity, nurse competency and the need to increase staffing.

## **HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS**

September home sales exceeded last year's figures by 5.4 percent, and activity for the first three quarters of 2019 is about even with the same period in 2018, according to Ohio Realtors. September sales reached 13,339, versus 12,653 in the same month last year.

## **INSURANCE**

Medicare's annual Open Enrollment period began Tuesday, Oct. 15 and ends Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019. The Ohio departments of aging and insurance said they encourage Ohioans with Medicare to review their coverage options to ensure they are choosing the best plan to meet their needs and their budgets.

## **JUDICIAL**

The Ohio Supreme Court should overturn a Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) order granting American Electric Power (AEP) of Ohio's request to charge customers to subsidize its two Ohio Valley Electric Corporation (OVEC) coal plants in Ohio and Indiana, the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) said during oral arguments on Tuesday in the case *In re Application of Ohio Power Company*.

The amount being charged by AEP Ohio is approximately \$72 million as of the end of 2018, according to OCC, which noted these are the same two coal plants that are to be subsidized by Ohioans under HB6 (Callender-Wilkin).

Gov. Mike DeWine announced Tuesday that Ohio is now offering \$7.5 million in grant funding to support the expansion of specialized court programs that focus on recovery from substance use or mental health disorders. DeWine proposed the grants in March as part of his RecoveryOhio initiative. Specialized court dockets give judges the flexibility to place defendants with mental health or substance use disorders into treatment rather than sentencing them to jail.

The Kasich administration clearly meant to avoid public debate over its academic distress plan and essentially created an entirely new bill when it added the plan to legislation that had almost cleared the General Assembly, the attorney for Youngstown City Schools argued Wednesday before the Ohio Supreme Court. Justices heard oral arguments Wednesday in the district's challenge to Ohio's academic distress commission law, enacted in 2015.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Attorney General Dave Yost announced police veteran Dwight Holcomb as the new executive director of the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) and Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) following the resignation of Jeffrey Scott, who held the post less than six months. Holcomb joins OPOTA and OPOTC after serving as Upper Arlington's police chief for 27 years, later directing the Ohio Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Ohio Investigative Unit and, since 2006, acting as vice president of corporate security for the Dispatch Printing Company and its affiliates.

## **LIBRARIES**

The Ohio Library Council (OLC) announced Thursday that it has selected Jay Smith as its new director of government and legal services. Smith currently serves as the deputy director of legislative services for the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) and has been a lobbyist for the organization since 2010. Prior to his work at OSBA, Smith was state director of government affairs for the Fraternal Order of Police of Ohio and a legislative aide in the Ohio House of Representatives.



## **LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

Lt. Gov. Jon Husted announced Monday he would be leading an economic development mission to London, United Kingdom (U.K.) from Saturday through Tuesday, Oct. 29. He will be joined by a delegation of senior JobsOhio leaders and business and economic development leaders from Southeast Ohio and the Stark County Minority Business Association.

## **LOBBYISTS**

Sen. Kristina Roegner (R-Hudson) endorsed Freedom Foundation Wednesday as Aaron Withe, Freedom Foundation national director, announced the organization's expansion into Ohio during a press conference held at the Statehouse. The group seeks to implement the U.S. Supreme Court's *Janus* decision which found government employees cannot be forced to financially support a labor union as a requirement to keep their job.

## **MARIJUANA/HEMP**

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) on Friday awarded certificates of operation to two more medical marijuana dispensaries. There are now 42 dispensaries operating under the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program.

## **MILITARY AFFAIRS**

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the Ohio National Guard became more of an operational force as the nation has fought a counterinsurgency for the last 18 years, Adjutant General John Harris told a House committee Wednesday. The House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee held what Chair Rick Perales (R-Beavercreek) called a "State of the Military" hearing, where he invited Harris and Ohio Department of Veterans Services (DVS) Director Deborah Ashenhurst to testify about their agencies.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife will release ring-necked pheasants at 24 of Ohio's public hunting areas later this fall. More than 14,000 pheasants are scheduled to be released, ODNR said.

## **PENSIONS**

The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) is considering changes for future hires that would require them to work longer before earning full benefits, diminish the benefits they earn for each year worked and curtail the size of inflationary increases. They would also pay slightly more into the system to establish individual investment accounts but would get a chance to share in the system's gains when investment earnings outpace expectations. The plan also proposes a third class of workers between the general worker class and public safety/law enforcement class, for more strenuous jobs that might require earlier retirement, such as prison guards. OPERS is the largest of Ohio's five public worker pension funds by membership and assets.

A Franklin County judge this week dismissed a legal challenge to the Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund's (OP&F) decision to move from a self-insured health care plan to a system of giving retirees

stipends to buy their own coverage. The class action lawsuit, *Alan Zwegat et al. v. Board of Trustees, Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund*, challenges the board's shift in coverage that retirees argued left them with lesser coverage at greater cost, and with provider options limited by vendor AON. Common Pleas Judge Richard Frye noted in his decision that state law has always left offering health care to the discretion of OP&F, unlike the mandatory offering of pension and disability benefits. That fact undercuts the plaintiffs' contention the shift represented a breach of contract, Frye wrote.

## **PEOPLE**

Policy Matters Ohio (PMO) announced that Jasmine Ayres has joined the organization as its new policy liaison. In her role, Ayres will work to connect the group's research and analysis with state policymakers, allies and the general public. She will focus her efforts on reforming Ohio's tax code to address what PMO maintains is a system that "favors the wealthy and powerful while failing to generate enough revenue to properly fund public schools, infrastructure and important community needs."

## **SECRETARY OF STATE**

Ohio's state government should do more to ensure people leaving prison are registered to vote, Secretary of State Frank LaRose said Wednesday. "I want to work with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) ... to make registering to vote part of the pre-release program," LaRose told attendees of the Columbus Chamber of Commerce Government Day at the Hilton Columbus Downtown. "As we're getting people ready to go back out on the streets and re-engage in a positive way in the community, I think we should work to get them registered to vote again as well."

## **STATE GOVERNMENT**

A range of groups involved in the criminal justice system appeared before the House Commerce and Labor Committee Wednesday to support changes in occupational licensing restrictions on those with past felony or misdemeanor convictions.

Gov. Mike DeWine announced Monday the launch of an updated training program aimed at educating state employees about domestic violence and its effect on the workplace. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) developed the web-based training in partnership with the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS). The training is mandatory for managers and is meant to give them techniques to use when talking with staff who may be experiencing or causing harm in a relationship. All state employees will also have the option to participate in the training.

## **TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Ohio Road to Our Future Joint Legislative Study Committee held its first meeting Tuesday since its creation under the transportation budget, HB62 (Oelslager). Co-chair Rep. Dave Greenspan (R-Westlake) said the committee is studying various aspects of transportation, particularly in regard to the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) future. The first meeting was on ODOT employee demographics and ways to provide greater efficiency through new technology.

The red "X" on the electronic sign hanging over the freeway changed to a green down arrow, and soon, drivers filled into the lane. With that, Ohio's first SmartLane opened on a stretch of I-670 stretching from downtown Columbus to the east outer belt of the capital city, the beginning of a "proof of concept" that state officials said could soon be extended to other parts of the state.

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is traveling around the state seeking input from Ohioans on what kind of transportation system they would like to see by 2045. ODOT is working on the state's long-range plan as required by federal law, to help guide the state's transportation policies and investment strategies for the next 20 years. The agency updates the plan every five years, and ODOT is currently seeking input on the Access Ohio 2045 plan by holding meetings around the state.

## **VETERANS**

Attorney General Dave Yost's office is joining veteran and fraternal organizations in supporting legislation to authorize electronic bingo, a move that could resolve litigation dating back several years and now pending in the Ohio Supreme Court. Under HB282 (Holmes-LaRe), existing organizations that already conduct instant or "pull tab" bingo, defined in law as Class 3 bingo, could do so with electronic machines. The legislation is not meant to expand the types of entities that conduct the games nor the forms of gambling they can offer, said Mitch Given, executive director of the Ohio Veterans & Fraternal Charitable Coalition, in testimony to the House Finance Committee.

## **LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY:**

### **SENATE:**

#### **PASSED BY SENATE**

- HB189 AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY (Rep. John Patterson, Sen. Louis Blessing III) To revise the laws governing amusement ride operation and safety, to designate this act as "Tyler's Law," and to declare an emergency.  
Vote 30-0, Emergency Clause 30-0
- SB58 NONVIOLENT CRIMINALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS (Sen. Theresa Gavarone) To express the intent of the General Assembly to reform the process of restoring the competency of individuals with serious mental illness charged with nonviolent crimes and to provide alternatives for treatment.  
Vote 30-1
- SB59 NALOXONE DISPENSING WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION (Sen. Nickie Antonio) To require the State Board of Pharmacy to educate license holders about the law authorizing naloxone dispensing without a prescription.  
Vote 31-0
- SB89 CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION (Sen. Matt Huffman) With regard to career-technical education and the compensation of joint vocational school districts located in enterprise zones.  
Vote 31-0
- SB151 MATERNAL MORTALITY AWARENESS MONTH (Sen. Tina Maharath) To designate the month of May as "Maternal Mortality Awareness Month."  
Vote 31-0

## **CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE AMENDMENTS**

- SB24 ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIAS TASK FORCE (Sen. Steve Wilson) To establish the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Task Force.  
Vote 31-0, Senate does concur
- SB26 TAX DEDUCTIONS-TEACHERS, BUSINESS (Sen. Stephanie Kunze) To authorize a state income tax deduction for teachers' out-of-pocket expenses for professional development and classroom supplies.  
Vote 30-1, Senate does concur

## **ADOPTED BY SENATE**

- SR376 URGE CONGRESS-RATIFY USMCA (Sen. Larry Obhof) To urge the United States Congress to ratify the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.  
Vote 22-9

## **HOUSE:**

### **PASSED BY HOUSE**

- HB76 BALLOT LANGUAGE UNIFORMITY (Rep. Derek Merrin) To enact the "Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act" to modify the form of election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.  
Vote 54-39, Bill Amended on Floor
- HB119 LOCAL CONTROL-TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS (Rep. Reggie Stoltzfus) To grant municipal and county courts original and exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action concerning a traffic law violation, to modify certain requirements governing the use of traffic law photo-monitoring devices by a local authority, and to make corrective changes to the distracted driving and texting-while-driving law.  
Vote 91-2
- HB209 ABOLISH ESTATE BY DOWER (Rep. Sara Carruthers, Rep. Darrell Kick) To abolish the estate by dower.  
Vote 61-32
- SB7 TEMP STATE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES-MILITARY (Sen. Peggy Lehner, Sen. Robert Hackett) Regarding temporary state occupational licenses for members of the military and their spouses.  
Vote 93-0
- HB65 CHILD CARE SAFETY-PARENTAL NOTICE (Rep. Rick Carfagna) Regarding parental notice of serious risks to the health or safety of children receiving child care.  
Vote 89-1
- HB117 DAY DESIGNATION-FRANK ROBINSON (Rep. Terrence Upchurch) To designate August 31 as "Frank Robinson Day."  
Vote 90-0
- HB295 ELECTRIC SCOOTERS (Rep. James Hoops) To establish requirements governing low-speed electric scooters.  
Vote 89-1
- SB5 PROMOTING PROSTITUTION PENALTIES (Sen. Stephanie Kunze, Sen. Matt Dolan) To amend the penalties for promoting prostitution.  
Vote 90-0