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Week in Review
June 6, 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.

ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

State and county mental health and addiction officials convened their first ever joint conference on recovery last week in Columbus, where former Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton told attendees they live in the best state for achieving recovery.

AGRICULTURE

The Kasich administration presented its final 2016 farmland tax values at a public hearing last Thursday, leaving farmers and foresters on the Agricultural Advisory Committee frustrated. Representatives of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF), Ohio Farmers Union (OFU) and Ohio Forestry Association (OFA) said although recent changes to the Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) formula have improved the system, they believe the Ohio Department of Taxation (ODT) did not go far enough to address what they say are unfair and harmful taxes on their members.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine criticized the federal government's directive on transgender students' use of school facilities, but did not join a Texas-led lawsuit against the administration of President Barack Obama at this point.

AUDITOR OF STATE

Two central Ohio Medicaid providers owe the state more than \$1.5 million because they use unqualified employees to deliver services, Auditor Dave Yost's office said last week. One Drop Medical Transportation LLC and Amandacare Inc. are on the hook for \$781,799 and \$794,082 in Medicaid billings, respectively, plus interest from July 2011 through June 2014.

CORRECTIONS

Former Correctional Institution Inspection Committee (CIIC) Director Joanna Saul's final report awards the Southeastern Correctional Complex good marks overall while reaching the unusual conclusion that its medical and mental health operations "could not be rated." Saul said Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) staff declined to cooperate with various CIIC inquiries into inmate health care. The 178-page inspection report was released on Tuesday, May 24, one day before Saul stepped down.

EDUCATION

Legislative, business, K-12 and higher education leaders will soon convene to consider how better to evaluate and fund schools designed to keep would-be dropouts in school. Created in HB 2 (Dovilla-Roegner), 2015's charter school overhaul, the panel is to look into the efficacy of paying dropout recovery schools based on completion or competency, while also devising recommendations on what defines a "quality" dropout recovery school.

ELECTIONS 2016

Endorsements made over the week include the following:

- The Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters endorsed Pat DeWine and John P. O'Donnell for the Ohio Supreme Court.
- United Mine Workers of America endorsed Rob Portman for U.S. Senate.
- The Ohio Federation of Teachers endorsed Ted Strickland for U.S. Senate.

ELECTIONS 2018

Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor said she is giving "very serious consideration" to a gubernatorial run in 2018, noting it would be "premature to say I'm absolutely running for governor." She said three important issues that she has been working on include workforce development, the opioid epidemic and infrastructure, specifically lead piping.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Both the House and the Senate released their tentative session schedule for the remainder of 2016:

the House has five session days scheduled with three "if needed" days while the Senate has 14 session days and seven "if needed" days.

Now that the dust has settled on the legislative sessions from the week of May 23, a total of 36 bills cleared both chambers of the Legislature -- more if the bills that were added to the passing bills are counted -- and are headed to the governor for his signature.

GOVERNOR

Gov. John Kasich Tuesday signed 12 bills into law: HB 37 (Stinziano-Duffey) which eliminates the maximum permitted alcohol content of beer; SB 215 (Hughes-LaRose), which gives immunity to persons for damages caused when forcibly removing a child or animal from a car; HB 180 (Maag), the contractor residency measure; HB 240 (Huffman-T. Johnson), which revises the coroners' law; HB 187 (Ginter) which provides for emergency medical services to an injured dog or cat; HB 299 (Blessing-Rezabek) which deals with applying for an autism scholarship and testing/graduation requirements for chartered nonpublic schools; HB 431 (Sheehy-Patterson) designating Feb. 17 as "Annie Glenn Communication Disorders Awareness Day"; SB188 (Seitz-Tavares) designating April as "Genocide Awareness Month"; HB 116 (Brown-Ginter) which provides for medication synchronization, among other items; HB 207 (Henne-McColley) which deals with workers' comp changes; HB 219 (Barnes) which designates January as "Thyroid Health Awareness Month"; and HB 352 (T. Johnson) which designates April as "Osteopathic Medicine Recognition Month."

The governor made the following appointments during the week:

- William R. Kilimnik of Liberty Twp. (Butler County) to the TourismOhio Advisory Board for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and ending Sept. 27, 2016.
- K. Paul St. Germain of Upper Arlington (Franklin County) to the Ohio Humanities Council for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and ending Oct. 30, 2016.
- Dr. Richard A. Ross of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and ending May 17, 2025.
- Cody M. Clemens of Malta (Morgan County) as the student trustee member of the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and ending May 17, 2018.
- Mark D. Wagoner Jr. of Ottawa Hills (Lucas County) to the Ohio Military Facilities Commission for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and continuing at the pleasure of the governor.
- David A. Ledonne of California, KY to the Governor's Executive Workforce Board for a term beginning May 27, 2016 and continuing at the pleasure of the governor.
- Alex Johnson of Solon (Cuyahoga County) to the Community Schools Dropout Recovery Study Committee for a term beginning May 31, 2016 and continuing at the pleasure of the governor.
- Todd C. Davidson of Cleveland (Cuyahoga County) to the Cleveland State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning May 31, 2016 and ending May 1, 2025.
- J. Richard Lumpe of Columbus (Franklin County) to the State Employment Relations Board for a term beginning June 1, 2016 and ending Oct. 6, 2021.

MARIJUANA

The campaign group seeking a statewide vote for medical marijuana legalization called off its efforts over the holiday weekend, saying the "moderately good" marijuana legislation passed by the General Assembly would make it difficult to continue. Ohioans for Medical Marijuana, which is affiliated

with the Marijuana Policy Project, said in a statement that it would suspend its signature gathering drive.

PAYDAY LOANS

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) applauded efforts by former state Attorney General Richard Cordray to curtail predatory "payday" and auto title lending in Ohio and other states, but a leading national think tank says the federal proposal "misses a historic opportunity." Cordray, now director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) in Washington, D.C., announced the new administration policy in Kansas City, MO, saying the proposed rule would require lenders of payday, auto title, deposit advance, high-cost installment and open-ended loans to evaluate borrowers' ability to repay while still covering basic living expenses. Lenders would also be blocked from repeated attempts to debit the borrower's bank account, with the goal of eliminating excessive fees.

TREASURER OF STATE

Ohio became the first state in the nation to launch ABLE savings accounts for the disabled under federal law, Treasurer Josh Mandel announced. Created by the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act and authorized in Ohio by HB 155 (Dever-Conditt), state STABLE Accounts allow persons with disabilities to save and invest money tax-free without surrendering eligibility for Medicaid, SSI, SSDI and other means-tested programs.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

Legislators have recessed for the summer.