

OHIO PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

Bill Information

HB74 ENACT FY22-23 TRANSPORTATION BUDGET *(OELSLAGER S)*

To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs.

CURRENT STATUS

3/31/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. immediately

HB110 OPERATING BUDGET *(OELSLAGER S)*

To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023, to levy taxes, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

CURRENT STATUS

7/1/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; effective 7/1/21

HB140 MODIFY ELECTION NOTICES, BALLOT LANGUAGE FOR PROPERTY TAX LEVIES *(MERRIN D)*

To enact the "Ballot Uniformity and Transparency Act" to modify the form of election notices and ballot language for property tax levies.

CURRENT STATUS

9/21/2021 - Senate Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)

HB141 MAKE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS *(SKINDELL M, UPCHURCH T)*

To make appropriations related to public transportation.

CURRENT STATUS

2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance

HB146

REGARDS APPLYING PREVAILING WAGE LAW TO PUBLIC PROJECTS (RIEDEL C, MANCHESTER S)

To allow political subdivisions, special districts, and state institutions of higher education to elect to apply the Prevailing Wage Law to public improvement projects.

CURRENT STATUS

6/23/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing)

HB157

MODIFY MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX RULES - COVID WFH (JORDAN K, EDWARDS J)

To amend Section 29 of H.B. 197 of the 133rd General Assembly to modify municipal income tax employer withholding rules for COVID-19-related work-from-home employees.

CURRENT STATUS

6/2/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means

HB267

LIMIT PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS (JORDAN K)

To limit the duration of public health orders and to allow the General Assembly to act via concurrent resolution in response to a public health emergency if the Governor or Department of Health does not.

CURRENT STATUS

5/4/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government

HB275

EXPAND POLITICAL SUBDIVISION JOINT PURCHASING AUTHORITY (LAMPTON B)

To expand political subdivision joint purchasing authority to expressly include purchases for construction services.

CURRENT STATUS

5/12/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)

HB283

EXPAND DISTRACTED DRIVING LAWS (ABRAMS C, LAMPTON B)

To expand the texting while driving prohibition to a general prohibition against using an electronic wireless communications device while driving, with certain exceptions, and to create data collection requirements based on associated violations of the distracted driving laws.

CURRENT STATUS

9/23/2021 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Criminal Justice, (Third Hearing)

HB350 PROHIBIT MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINE *(CUTRONA A)*

To prohibit mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations, requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination, and certain other actions relating to an individual's COVID-19 vaccination or health status and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

6/22/2021 - House Civil Justice, (First Hearing)

HB388 REGARDING VACCINE REFUSAL *(JORDAN K)*

To prohibit taking certain actions against an individual because the individual refuses to be vaccinated against a disease.

CURRENT STATUS

8/12/2021 - Introduced

HB401 EMPLOYER-MANDATED COVID VACCINATION INJURY *(EDWARDS J)*

To exempt an injury or disability caused by an employer-mandated COVID-19 vaccination from the Workers' Compensation Law and to allow the employee to sue the employer for damages.

CURRENT STATUS

8/24/2021 - Introduced

HB435 GA INTENT TO ENACT VACCINE LEGISLATION *(CARFAGNA R, SEITZ B)*

To declare the General Assembly's intent to enact legislation regarding vaccines.

CURRENT STATUS

9/28/2021 - House Health, (First Hearing)

SB4 EXEMPT EMS LINE OPERATORS-PUBLIC RECORDS *(ROEGNER K)*

To include emergency service telecommunicators, protective services workers, certain Ohio National Guard members, and certain mental health care providers as individuals whose residential and familial information is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Law.

CURRENT STATUS

6/8/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. 9/7/21

SB15 FISCAL OFFICERS-LIABILITY *(WILSON S)*

To change the circumstances in which certain fiscal officers may be held liable for a loss of public funds.

CURRENT STATUS

3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government

SB18 INTERNAL REVENUE CODE (ROEGNER K, SCHAFFER T)

To expressly incorporate changes in the Internal Revenue Code since March 27, 2020, into Ohio law, to exclude certain loan amounts forgiven under federal law from the commercial activity tax, to authorize a commercial activity tax exclusion for Bureau of Workers' Compensation dividends paid to employers, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

3/31/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. immediately

SB32 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION (RULLI M)

To require the Director of Transportation to establish an electric vehicle charging station grant rebate program and to make an appropriation.

CURRENT STATUS

2/17/2021 - Senate Transportation, (First Hearing)

SB56 INDEMNITY-DESIGN CONTRACTS (BLESSING III L)

To regulate the use of indemnity provisions in professional design contracts related to public improvements.

CURRENT STATUS

9/28/2021 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing)

SB67 STUDY PROGRESS / CHALLENGES OF AFRICAN AMERICANS (WILLIAMS S)

To establish a committee to study the progress and challenges of African Americans in Ohio and to make an appropriation.

CURRENT STATUS

3/16/2021 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)

SB93 REQUIRE VOTE-COUNTY SALES TAX INCREASE (ANTANI N)

To require voter approval of any increase in the rate of a county sales tax.

CURRENT STATUS

9/21/2021 - Senate Ways and Means, (First Hearing)

SB97 MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX-WORK FROM HOME (ROEGNER K)

To modify municipal income tax employer withholding rules for COVID-19-related work-from-home employees

CURRENT STATUS

5/12/2021 - Senate Ways and Means, (First Hearing)

SB152 FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE TASK FORCE (HOAGLAND F)

To establish the Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Task Force in the office of the Attorney General and to make an appropriation.

CURRENT STATUS

4/21/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance

SB169 PROHIBIT MANDATORY VACCINATIONS (BRENNER A)

To prohibit mandatory vaccinations against the coronavirus, to prohibit requiring proof of vaccinations generally, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

5/26/2021 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, Senate Health, (First Hearing)

SB209 MASK MANDATES (BRENNER A)

With regard to mask mandates and facial covering requirements for public schools, state institutions of higher education, and businesses.

CURRENT STATUS

9/8/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate General Government Budget

Week in Review

ABORTION

Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein on Monday filed an amicus brief supporting the Center for Reproductive Rights' response challenging a Mississippi law that seeks to ban abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy. Columbus was joined by 28 other local governments in the brief, which was filed in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. Leading the brief, Columbus was joined by Cincinnati and Dayton, as well as the city of Chicago, IL; city of Gary, IN; city of Houston, TX; King County, WA; city of Los Angeles, CA; county of Los Angeles, CA; city of Madison, WI; county of Marin, CA; Milwaukee County, WI; Multnomah County, OR; New York City, NY; city of Philadelphia, PA; city of Oakland, CA; city of Portland, OR; city of Saint Paul, MN; city and county of San Francisco, CA; county of San Mateo, CA; county of Santa Clara, CA; city of Santa Monica, CA; city of Seattle, WA; Travis County, TX; and the city of West Hollywood, CA.

AGRICULTURE

Counties, soil and water conservation districts, land trusts, cities and townships can now apply to the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODAg) Office of Farmland Preservation for local sponsor certification for the easement purchase program through Friday, Oct. 22. Local sponsors that complete the certification application and qualify will be allocated a portion of the \$6.5 million in Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) 2022 funds, ODAg said.

ARTS, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The legalization of sports betting in Ohio and across the country will likely revolutionize the industry, according to Cleveland Indians Innovation Manager Chris Hart. "The role that sports betting will play, as it becomes legalized in more states, is going to significantly change the way that we all consume sports," Hart said during a "Future of Sports" virtual event hosted by OhioX and sponsored by JobsOhio.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ohio Attorney General (AG) Dave Yost and 23 of his Republican colleagues in other states sent a letter to President Joe Biden Friday, threatening legal action if the president goes through with implementing the rule requiring businesses with 100 or more employees to require their workforce to be vaccinated or undergo weekly testing. The coalition of AGs outlined their legal and policy concerns with the mandate, which will be carried out through an Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) emergency temporary standard.

FY22-23 BUDGET

As the DeWine administration moves to implement a new managed care program, lawmakers used the state budget bill to authorize a pilot program to test the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in managed care, although the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) said it's working to figure out what the General Assembly had in mind.

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Members of the Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus held a virtual briefing Monday on the mental health crisis among the state's children and youth even as the COVID-19 pandemic continues affecting everyday life. This builds on the many other challenges children have had to deal with over the last several years including bullying, abuse, racism, eating disorders and other undiagnosed mental health conditions.

Panelists for the discussion included Orman Hall, who is with the Ohio University College of Human Services and Professions, Dr. Whitney Raglin-Bignall, a pediatric psychologist with Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Jennifer Vargo with the Ohio Department of Education Office of Whole Child Supports.

CORONAVIRUS

Younger, sicker and for longer -- that was the litany from the doctors and nurses who joined Gov. Mike DeWine for a news conference Tuesday where he made yet another plea for the nearly half of Ohio's population who are not vaccinated to get vaccinated. Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff said, "If you are young and unvaccinated it's now probably only a question of when, not if, you get COVID-19. When you get COVID-19 without the protection of a vaccine, there is a very real risk you'll end up in the hospital or the obituary pages. The numbers really tell it all, COVID has changed and is now making younger Ohioans who are not vaccinated very sick. Don't become a statistic when there is a simple, safe, and effective alternative. Go out today and get vaccinated. You'll be glad. Your family will be glad. And the doctors and nurses will be grateful," he added.

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) received approval from the Controlling Board Monday to waive competitive selection to spend \$106 million on one million at-home rapid COVID-19 tests from a Florida vendor, partially to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus in Ohio schools. ODH's request to the board stated that it intends to use the BinaxNOW at-home tests, a 15-minute rapid test that individuals can use at home with the assistance of a telehealth session, as a foundation of its school COVID testing strategy through the remainder of the year. The request also states that the tests will go to community partners to keep nursing homes and communities safe.

Saying hospital leaders have told him Ohio faces a "staffing crisis," Gov. Mike DeWine announced the state will spend \$1 million to encourage vaccination for Ohioans ages 12 to 25 with a "Vax-2-School" scholarship program similar to the "Vax-A-Million" drawings that he said were "very successful." That age group has a lower vaccinated rate compared to others at 46 percent, DeWine said in a Thursday briefing with Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff. The new program will offer five \$100,000 scholarships that can be used for any form of education and 50 \$10,000 scholarships. All Ohioans in the age group who have been vaccinated are eligible if they enter.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Democratic legislators urged the General Assembly to act on bills addressing sexual violence Thursday, following a Wednesday evening dismissal of lawsuits against Ohio State University (OSU) regarding alleged abuse by deceased Dr. Richard Strauss. Attorneys for the plaintiffs plan to appeal the ruling. U.S. District Court Judge Michael Watson dismissed the suits because the statute of limitations had expired, according to media reports, while also writing that OSU "utterly failed these victims" from 1979 to 2018. Plaintiffs' attorneys previously sought Watson's recusal.

EDUCATION

The three school districts now under state oversight will soon be submitting their plans for improving academic performance and

reverting to local control. Superintendent Paolo DeMaria discussed implementation of the exit plans as part of his monthly report Monday to the State Board of Education (SBOE), which largely focused on the department's role in following up on various provisions of the state budget and other recent legislative enactments. Under HB110 (Oelslager), the local boards of the districts in question -- East Cleveland, Lorain and Youngstown -- must submit their academic improvement plans by Thursday, Sept. 30.

The House Primary and Secondary Education Committee Tuesday unanimously accepted an amendment (AM1804) to substitute SB1 (Wilson-McColley) that permits schools to employ individuals as substitute teachers who do not have a post-secondary degree for the 2021-2022 school year only. The amendment, offered by committee Chair Rep. Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville), does require the individual to meet certain criteria:

- Meet the district's or school's own set of educational requirements.
- Be deemed of good moral character.
- Successfully complete a criminal records check.

The State Board of Education heard about plans for Warren County schools to institute a new COVID testing protocol Tuesday to avoid sending large numbers of apparently healthy students into home quarantine based on viral exposure. Tom Isaacs, superintendent of the Warren County Educational Service Center, said the nine county school districts started to see large numbers of students sent home to quarantine when school resumed this fall, with the Lebanon and Carlisle Local districts even closing briefly.

The State Board of Education updated its official procedures so the president can no longer restrict public testimony based on the topics addressed, a practice that arose from a year-plus of debate on issues of racism, discrimination and equity. That debate continued Tuesday inside and outside the board, as protestors and counter-protestors gathered outside the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to air opinions on critical race theory and the board again debated the stance it took last summer and how it should react to a recent opinion from the attorney general.

The Ohio Facilities Construction Committee (OFCC) held its monthly meeting Thursday with a "project spotlight" on Winton Woods City School District in Hamilton County. Ryan Meeds, an OFCC project manager, said Winton Woods was part of a pilot program that involved a move to project-based learning (PBL). This included a "flipped classroom" curriculum in which students would attend online lectures, do reading assignments and research outside of the classroom and then present and collaborate with other students in class.

ELECTIONS

The Ohio Elections Commission Thursday found the campaign of Rep. Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) had failed to file a campaign finance report, but it did not sanction the campaign for good cause. The complaint against Hicks-Hudson was made by the secretary of state's office, alleging that her campaign failed to file a 2020 post primary report and had failed to file a report by electronic means.

ELECTIONS 2021

Friday marked the beginning of voting for military and overseas Ohioans for the Tuesday, Nov. 2 election, Secretary of State Frank LaRose said. All other registered voters may begin voting in-person or by mail-in absentee ballot starting on Tuesday, Oct. 5, with the deadline to be registered on Monday, Oct. 4.

For the week ending Sept. 18, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 12,952 initial traditional unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). That number is higher than last week, when the department reported 8,834 traditional jobless claims.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- The congressional campaign of Mike Carey announced the endorsement of former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

ELECTIONS 2022

Facing an already brutal primary with a former staffer of former President Donald Trump, U.S. Rep. Anthony Gonzalez (R-Canton) released a statement late Thursday, Sept. 16 announcing he would not run for re-election in 2022. The two-term congressman has been a target of Trump and his supporters after he was one of 10 Republicans to vote to impeach the former president in the wake of the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol riots. The Ohio Republican Party later censured Gonzalez and called for him to resign in the wake of that vote.

Sen. Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls) became the latest Republican to join the crowded race to succeed U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH), saying he wants to put the focus of the race on Ohio. Dolan's campaign released an ad to go along with his announcement, saying that he doesn't just talk loud, but has a "real record of conservative success." It said Dolan has not pandered about reducing government and taxes, but has a record of doing so. He also hasn't just claimed to support policy, but actually did so through legislation, the ad states. Former President Donald Trump Monday evening made it clear that Dolan won't be getting his endorsement, complaining of the name change made by Dolan's family to the Cleveland baseball team.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Ohio's unemployment rate stayed at 5.4 percent for August, unchanged from July as nonagricultural wage and salary employment decreased 2,400 over the month, from a revised 5,348,300 in July to 5,345,900 in August 2021. ODJFS said the number of workers unemployed in Ohio in August was 305,000, up from 300,000 in

July. The number of unemployed has decreased by 218,000 in the past 12 months from 523,000. The August unemployment rate for Ohio decreased from 9.0 percent in August 2020.

ENERGY/UTILITIES

Former lawmaker and president of the Ohio Gas Association Jimmy Stewart appeared before the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Tuesday to give an update on the natural gas industry to lawmakers, noting that the production of gas has fallen in recent months due to lower prices. Stewart said his group represents natural gas distribution companies and cooperatives and is not to be confused with the Ohio Oil and Gas Association, which represents producers. He said more of the natural gas produced in the U.S. today comes from shale sources, as there are fewer investments being made in the traditional vertical nonshale wells.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) was forced to reexamine its regulatory chops Thursday after the Ohio Supreme Court held that commissioners had violated the *sine qua non* of ratemaking by allowing Suburban Natural Gas Co. to bill customers for pipeline infrastructure not truly "used and useful" -- the statutory baseline for utility charges in the Buckeye State.

Two Democrats announced legislation this week that would prioritize clean energy jobs and environmental justice programs as part of the state's energy and economic policy. Reps. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland) and Casey Weinstein (D-Hudson) said their HB429 -- the "Energy Jobs and Justice Act" -- is a comprehensive energy policy "rooted in equity, economic development, and accountability."

ENVIRONMENT

The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) recently approved two projects to support air quality enhancements at Batt and Stevens Inc. in Defiance and Pride Dry Cleaners, LLC in Holland. The financing is being provided through OAQDA's Clean Air Resource Center (CARC), the agency said.

GAMING/GAMBLING

The Ohio Casino Control Commission (OCCC) on Monday unanimously approved a debt transaction proposed by Jack Ohio LLC during a special meeting. Officials from the Jack Cleveland Casino proposed the debt transaction during the Wednesday, Sept. 15 meeting, but commissioners tabled the matter until Monday to receive additional information during an executive session. During the OCCC's regularly-scheduled meeting on Wednesday, commissioners approved a plan from Penn National Gaming to allow for cashless, contactless wagering at its Hollywood Columbus Casino and Hollywood Toledo Casino.

Members of the forthcoming Conference Committee on HB29 (Wiggam-Miller) will negotiate and finalize legislation creating Ohio's new legalized sports gambling industry by late October, House Majority Floor Leader Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) and Rep. Jay Edwards (R-Nelsonville) told *Hannah News* on Thursday.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Legislation requiring public children services agencies to report child abuse or neglect in military families to the appropriate military authorities now includes an emergency clause and language on the Ohio Redistricting Commission and judicial elections education. The Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee on Tuesday reported out HB92 (Abrams-Loychik) after adding two amendments from Sen. Steve Wilson (R-Maineville). The first amendment requires the Ohio Redistricting Commission to create a website for the public to submit proposed congressional redistricting plans, access Census data and view other submitted maps. It also requires a co-chair of the commission to notify other members whenever a member of the public submits a proposed congressional redistricting plan. The co-chair is also required to post plans from the public on the website. The second amendment clarifies that funding provided in the budget for "law-related education" on judicial candidates applies to all candidates that have filed to run for judicial office in the state. The bill went on to clear the Legislature on Wednesday, passing the Senate unanimously and then being agreed to by the House. It now heads to the governor for his signature.

Sen. Andrew Brenner (R-Delaware), speaking to the full Senate, called SB47's (Brenner-Peterson) move to restrict overtime pay for employee tasks "preliminary to or postliminary to" their principal duties or "activities requiring insubstantial or insignificant periods of time" outside employees' regular work day a "key vote" of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce. "It is important now that we recognize the millions of Americans that have changed their work style," Brenner said, citing increasing numbers of remote employees under COVID-19. For workers to request "de minimis" overtime, he said, "employers must request that employees perform that task. Small amounts of time do not have to be documented to comply with the Fair Labor Standards (FLS) Act." It went on to pass 25-7.

Legislation like HB322 (Jones) and HB327 (Grendell-Fowler Arthur) would create an environment similar to the one Fan Jiang hoped to escape when she left China, the Athens Asian American Alliance president said Wednesday. "Originally, I am from China, which is a country that has tremendous government censorship on almost everything. So, I am very sensitive to these kinds of bills, because I think these bills pretty much undermine the freedom and the foundation of this democracy," Jiang told the House State and Local Government Committee during her testimony opposing both bills.

Members of the Senate Transportation Committee expressed support for a House bill that would make changes to the state's handicap parking laws but sought clarity on certain provisions including the creation of a volunteer force that could help enforce the laws. Rep. Scott Wiggam (R-Wooster) gave sponsor testimony on his HB31 (Wiggam) before the committee during Wednesday's hearing.

The Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) received witness testimony on two items Monday, with the majority appearing

in regard to Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) rules on the hour requirements for used car dealerships. All rules on the agenda went on to clear JCARR, which held no "policy to rule" discussion during the meeting.

Chair Brian Baldrige (R-Winchester), Vice Chair Riordan McClain (R-Upper Sandusky) and Ranking Member Michael Sheehy (D-Oregon) all said a few words in remembrance of Doug Green, a former chair of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, who died of COVID-19 earlier this month. Additionally, the committee watched a video of Green singing "God Bless the U.S.A." That video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XPMwzpdicQ>.

Rep. Jennifer Gross (R-West Chester) has been removed from the Ohio House Health Committee, she confirmed to Cincinnati's FOX19 NOW, saying House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) told her she was off the committee because she recently tried to bring forth a "discharge petition" to move her controversial vaccine bill, HB248, out of the health committee and directly to the House floor for a vote. Asked about Gross' removal after session Wednesday, Cupp said he would not comment on internal caucus matters.

The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board (CSRAB) announced that tickets are now available for the 2021 edition of the Statehouse Haunted Tours. The special Halloween tours will take place Fri., Oct. 15; Sat., Oct. 16; Fri., Oct. 22 and Sat., Oct. 23. Tickets are \$13 for adults and \$7 for students ages 12 to 17. This is a ticketed event and tickets must be pre-ordered. Tours will depart every half hour between 7 and 9 p.m. Tickets are limited to 35 individuals per tour start. This year's tour will feature smaller groups and an entirely new route through the darkened halls of the building.

In other legislative action, the Senate Health Committee reported out HB176 (Carfagna-Hall), which revises the law governing the practice of athletic trainers; and the Senate Transportation Committee reported out HB21, which deals with special license plates.

GOVERNOR

The Governor's Ohio Human Trafficking Task Force announced the release of a new, comprehensive resource guide Tuesday to help children's services professionals understand and respond to sex and labor trafficking. The task force partnered with the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO), Ohio Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS) to produce the 27-page guide, which includes an overview of federal and state laws on the human trafficking of children and Ohio's anti-trafficking policy and advocacy landscape, as well as their effects on children's services. The Human Trafficking Resource Guide for Ohio's Public Children Services Agencies is available at www.humantrafficking.ohio.gov/links/PCSA-Resource-Guide.pdf.

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Randy Nelson Chandler of West Union (Adams County) to the Southern State Community College Board of Trustees for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending May 11, 2022.
- Kevin W. Lutz of Dublin (Union County) reappointed to the Medical Quality Foundation Board for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending July 20, 2024.
- Nathan Douglas Sikora of North Canton (Stark County) to the Chiropractic Loan Repayment Advisory Board for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending Feb. 20, 2022.
- Valerie L. Freda of Logan (Hocking County) to the TourismOhio Advisory Board for a term beginning Sept. 28, 2021 and ending Sept. 27, 2024.
- Lynn T. Holtzman of Bremen (Fairfield County) reappointed to the TourismOhio Advisory Board for a term beginning Sept. 28, 2021 and ending Sept. 27, 2024.
- Marlin L. Palich of Lakewood (Cuyahoga County) to the Ohio Real Estate Commission for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending June 30, 2026.
- Kelly Dawn Cole of Hamersville (Brown County) reappointed to the Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending June 2, 2026.
- Robert L. Winter of Cincinnati (Hamilton County) to the Ohio Cemetery Dispute Resolution Commission for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending July 1, 2025.
- William Randle Caskey of Newark (Licking County) to the Ohio Private Investigation and Security Services Commission for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending Dec. 31, 2025.
- Don G. Bryant of Oberlin (Lorain County) reappointed to the Petroleum Underground Storage Tank Release Compensation Board for a term beginning Sept. 17, 2021 and ending July 10, 2024.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Ohioans who take insulin to treat diabetes or have family members who do urged the Senate Insurance Committee on Wednesday to approve legislation, SB220 (Craig-Manning), which caps the price of the drug, which they said has seen dramatic cost increases that are leading patients to ration their use and often suffer dangerous complications as a result. The bill would cap out-of-pocket insulin costs at \$35 for a month's supply.

"I couldn't stop it. I couldn't protect my mother." Those were the words of Steve Piskor as he testified again before a legislative committee Thursday on the latest iteration of "Esther's Law," legislation named for his mother that seeks to end abuse in nursing

homes through the installation of cameras in patients' rooms.

Health care association leaders told the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee (JMOC) that staffing shortages are leading to Ohioans not getting needed care during a Thursday hearing. Those testifying included Lisa Von Lehmden Zidek, president of the Visiting Nurses Association of Ohio (VNAO); Pete Van Runkle, executive director of the Ohio Health Care Association (OHCA); and Nick Kalogeras, past president of the Ohio Association of Medical Equipment Services (OAMES). Carol Gilligan, president of Health Aid of Ohio, was unable to attend due to contracting COVID-19.

HIGHER EDUCATION

The Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) recently released a report highlighting its work to improve access to college classes for high school students. OACC, through its Success Center, completed cases studies of five local community colleges that paired with local school districts to help students succeed at college-level courses.

JUDICIAL

The Ohio Supreme Court is seeking public comment on proposed amendments to the Rules of Superintendence that would require every lower court or court division to adopt a "technology plan for the purposes of ensuring the efficient and effective use of technology in the delivery of services"

Rule changes also would eliminate the current ability of members of both the Commission on Dispute Resolution and Commission on Specialized Dockets to attend meetings by "telephonic or other electronic means ... for meeting attendance, quorum, and voting purposes." Proposed amendments reflect the recommendations of the Improving Court Operations Using Remote Technology (iCOURT) Task Force established by Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor to examine how Ohio courts were adapting to COVID-

19 through increased use of technology and to propose modernizations and improvements to access to justice.

The Ohio Supreme Court announced that former Justice Andy Douglas died Thursday at the age of 89. Douglas, the 139th justice of the Ohio Supreme Court, had served three terms on the Court from 1985 to 2002.

MARIJUANA/HEMP

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) has published the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program (MMCP) 2021 Dispensary Request for Application (RFA II), which had been authorized by the board during its last meeting, OBP spokesperson Cameron McNamee told *Hannah News*.

The Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP) on Tuesday awarded a dispensary certificate of operation to Harvest of Beaver Creek, located at 4370 Tonawanda Trail in Beaver Creek. The board has now issued 57 dispensary certificates of operation.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has created a new space for recreation where abandoned mine land (AML) hazards once existed in Southeast Ohio. The Moonville Rail Trail is a 16-mile-long tourist destination in Vinton and Athens counties that takes visitors through the beautiful woodlands of Southeast Ohio, including Zaleski State Forest. The two-phase project improved 4.1 miles of trail and helped open up 12.2 miles of rail-trail from Zaleski to New Marshfield.

A wetland project to reduce harmful algal blooms on Buckeye Lake has been completed, according to ODNR. The new Brooks Park Wetland Complex is the first H2Ohio wetland project in Central Ohio, ODNR said.

Ohio's deer archery hunting season opens on Saturday, Sept. 25, according to the ODNR Division of Wildlife. Last season, Ohio archery hunters harvested more than 93,500 deer, the highest total on record, ODNR said. Deer harvested with archery equipment made up 47 percent of all deer taken during 2020-2021.

The ODNR Division of Geological Survey has launched a new vessel to conduct research on the geology of Lake Erie. "Officially named 'Eriqan' ... the boat is custom designed for research work and features a steel hull, making it robust enough for use on Ohio's Great Lake," ODNR said.

The ODNR Division of Wildlife trawl surveys found there was a "well above average" walleye hatch in Summer 2021. In research presented to the Ohio Wildlife Council, fisheries biologists reported the 2021 walleye hatch was the fifth largest recorded over the past 35 years.

Posters from Ohio State Parks are available for \$9, according to ODNR. Posters with images from Cowan Lake, Hocking Hills, Malabar Farms, Marblehead Lighthouse, Mohican and Salt Fork State parks are available. The size of the posters is 16 inches by 24 inches, and do not come with frames. Posters are available at <https://tinyurl.com/745x4m2p>.

OHIO HISTORY

For the 10th year, the West Lawn (High Street side) of the Ohio Statehouse will host vintage "base ball" (historically two words), as members of the 134th Ohio General Assembly take on the Ohio Village Muffins and Lady Diamonds, Tuesday, Sept. 28, the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board (CSRAB) announced this week. Reminiscent of the era when the 1861 Ohio Statehouse had been recently completed, the historic game begins at 5:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

PENSIONS

Policymakers should begin thinking about how they're going to tackle the serious health care problems faced by retiring Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) troopers, according to Ohio Retirement Study Council (ORSC) Executive Director Bethany Rhodes. "Normally you hear me remind you that health care is not a guaranteed benefit. With the Highway Patrol Retirement System (HPRS), we have an inherent issue that will need to be addressed soon. ... Troopers have a mandatory retirement age. That means, on their 60th birthday, they are no longer employed -- whether they want to be, or whether they retire earlier -- but at 60 they are no longer employed," Rhodes said during Thursday's ORSC meeting.

PEOPLE

U.S. Senate candidate and Congressman Tim Ryan (D-Warren) announced Monday he has tested positive for COVID-19 and is quarantining at his home in Howland. Ryan has received a COVID-19 vaccine and said he previously tested negative for COVID-19 three times in the last 10 days before Monday's positive test results. U.S. Rep. Bob Latta (R-Bowling Green) also said Monday night that he had tested positive for COVID-19.

The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland announced Tuesday the death of Bishop Emeritus Anthony M. Pilla, who served as bishop of Cleveland from 1981 until he retired in 2006. He was born in 1932 and ordained as a priest in 1959.

Belmont County Sheriff Dave Lucas Wednesday identified former Statehouse lobbyist Tom Strussion and his wife Angela as victims of a double homicide. Law enforcement had been called to a house fire in Morristown on Tuesday when the bodies were found. Strussion had been at the center of a couple of the state's biggest scandals in the 1990s, according to various media reports. One involved the bribing of a state insurance department official in an influence peddling scheme and the other, the infamous "pancaking" of honoraria to legislators.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Ohio Department of Public Safety's (DPS) Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) has announced the certification of Utica Police Department (Licking County) and the recertification of Akron Police Department (Summit County), Huron County Sheriff's Office and Case Western Reserve University Police Department (Cuyahoga County) under state law enforcement standards adopted by the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board. Statewide, 540 agencies are currently certified and another nine in the certification process for officer use of force, including deadly force, and agency recruitment and hiring.

REDISTRICTING/REAPPORTIONMENT

Fair Districts Ohio -- a coalition of voter rights and community groups including the League of Women Voters Ohio and Common Cause -- rallied in Columbus on Tuesday, encouraging volunteers to lobby state legislators and officials to pass fair congressional maps less than a week after the Ohio Redistricting Commission passed new General Assembly maps along party lines.

After session, House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) told reporters that he believes it will be "extremely unlikely" for hearings on congressional redistricting before Sept. 30, the deadline for the Legislature to come up with a bipartisan, 10-year plan, which would then kick the process to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. He again blamed the delay in census data for the inability to meet the deadline. He said he does believe the new maps will be adopted by the end of November, the deadline set out in the Ohio Constitution to adopt a final plan, though he hopes it will be done before then.

As expected, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio and other groups Thursday filed a lawsuit in the Ohio Supreme Court challenging the new General Assembly maps adopted along party lines last week, arguing the maps violate provisions in the Ohio Constitution against maps being drawn to favor or disfavor a political party as well as requiring seats to be drawn to correspond with the statewide preferences of voters over the previous decade. In particular, the lawsuit focuses on the newly added Section 6 as part of Article XI in the Ohio Constitution, which states "No general assembly district plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party" and "the statewide proportion of districts whose voters, based on statewide state and federal partisan general election results during the last 10 years, favor each political party shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of the voters of Ohio."

TECHNOLOGY/AEROSPACE

Ohio can become a leader in emerging technology, the Buckeye Institute said a recent in a report, if it acts on 25 recommendations offered by the conservative think tank. It also offered three policy principles on shared data collection, reducing bureaucratic red tape and limiting regulatory burdens on businesses and technology entrepreneurs.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission Executive Director Ferzan Ahmed Monday outlined for commissioners the three main legal and procedural steps that the commission needs in place before it deploys its new toll collection system in early 2023.

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) Wednesday approved the latest list of major new transportation projects for the state, which includes \$292 million for new funding commitments. Those new commitments range from work on an I-75-County Route 99 interchange in Findlay, the U.S. 30 East Canton bypass in East Canton, the widening of a number of interstates around the state, and work on Interstate 70 and 270 around the Brice Road exit in Franklin County.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The Controlling Board Monday approved three items related to the unemployment compensation system including an amended contract with Experian Information Solutions "to implement an account takeover solution in support of the Office of Unemployment

Insurance Operations (OUIO)" sought by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS).

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) unemployment system has failed in the areas of customer service, claims processing and staffing -- all while paying more for its system than peer states, according to a performance audit from Auditor of State Keith Faber's office. The performance audit was required by the General Assembly in 133-HB614 (Fraizer-Richardson), which was passed in response to reports of egregious customer service failures during the COVID-19 pandemic.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The Senate Insurance Committee led off its hearing Wednesday with a few questions for returning Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Administrator Stephanie McCloud and four board members she reports to as part of the approval process for gubernatorial appointees. The committee considered and voted to send to the full Senate Gov. Mike DeWine's appointment of McCloud and directors Michael Taylor, representing labor; Tracie Sanchez, representing smaller employers; Kenneth Haffey, an accountant; and David Currier, an investment expert.

WORKFORCE

Gov. Mike DeWine and Lt. Gov. Jon Husted reminded Ohio businesses Monday to participate in the In-Demand Jobs Survey before it closes on Friday, Oct. 8, as it helps drive federal and state workforce investments. It is open to registered businesses, providing a voice to large and small ones alike, the administration said. It can be completed at <https://tinyurl.com/3uuywdp6>; respondents should have their Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) ready before beginning. Those with questions or feedback should contact workforce@owt.ohio.gov.

The "Ohio To Work" initiative is expanding into Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, Toledo and the Mahoning Valley, Gov. Mike DeWine, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and JobsOhio President and CEO J.P. Nauseef announced in a release Wednesday. It began in Cleveland last September. The release said the program has now "reached several thousand job seekers across the state, providing pathways to in-demand jobs through personalized career coaching, accelerated training options, local employer connections [and] career tools." JobsOhio leads the initiative, which currently has over 70 employers committed to hiring applicants. It is supported by almost a dozen training providers, which offer individuals "workforce-aligned training solutions" in a range of areas including machining, coding, health care technology and nursing assistance.