

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

6/15/2021 - , (First Hearing)

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

4/28/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means

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

3/3/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (First 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

6/10/2021 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Criminal Justice, (Second 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. 90 days

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

6/10/2021 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice

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

3/3/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means

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)

Week in Review

Friday, June 11, 2021

AGRICULTURE

Approximately 2,000 farmers have signed up for the Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative's (OACI) new mobile application, according to Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF) Water Quality and Research Director Jordan Hoewischer. Farmers who enter their information into the app can become certified, receive a conservation score and connect with H2Ohio and other funding programs to help them improve their conservation practices, Hoewischer told the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee during an informal hearing on Tuesday.

ARTS, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Ohio Poet Laureate Kari Gunter-Seymour is among 23 state and city poets laureate selected as 2021 poets laureate fellows by the Academy of American Poets, according to the Ohio Arts Council (OAC).

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Dave Yost says Google's apparent mission is to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" to Google -- a derivation of its corporate charter. In a lawsuit filed Tuesday, Ohio became the first state in the nation to brand the company a "common carrier" and its search engine a "public utility" in view of its near-monopoly over Internet search results. Yost says under Ohio law such regulation does not require the oversight of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) and is now critical as Google has come to deny open access to competitors of its ancillary products and services.

The Ohio Attorney General's Office has reached a settlement with "Dogs 4 Warriors" after the AG's Charitable Law Section probed alleged abuse of funds and deceptive fundraising by the registered nonprofit.

FY20-21 BUDGET

The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Monday released May 2021 preliminary revenue data. Total General Revenue Fund tax receipts finished the month \$744.7 million or 34.1 percent above the budgeted estimate as the state heads into the final month of FY21. FY21 ends on Wednesday, June 30. The state is nearly \$1.2 billion over the estimates for the 11 months of FY21, coming in at \$1,170,379,000 or 5.2 percent over estimates for total revenues of \$23,787,079,000 through May. As of this time last year, the state had collected a total of \$20,395,055,000, a difference of over \$3.3 billion.

FY22-23 BUDGET

The Senate budget's "offensive" child care proposals came out of nowhere, Groundwork Ohio Assistant Director Lynanne Gutierrez and other child care advocates said Friday. "We certainly were not expecting this -- especially in the middle of a pandemic -- for the Senate to make a hallmark issue out of really taking the wind out of this critical program for children and families," Gutierrez said during a press conference, referring to provisions in the latest version of HB110 (Oelslager) removing requirements that licensed child care providers be rated through the Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) program to provide publicly-funded child care.

The Ohio Mayors Alliance Thursday criticized a change made by Senate Republicans to HB110 which they said could open the door to income tax refund requests from individuals working from home during the pandemic. At the event, Columbus Mayor Andrew J. Ginther, Findlay Mayor Christina Muryn and Youngstown Mayor Jamael Tito Brown said that retroactive changes to a temporary pandemic law affecting remote work will have significant fiscal effects on many communities and could slow Ohio's economic recovery.

More than 100 housing, human services and business groups from across the state sent a letter to the Senate Friday expressing strong opposition to a budget sub bill provisions that could change tax valuations for affordable housing developments, saying it would make such developments economically unviable.

A group of behavioral health and addiction services groups sent senators a memo this week opposing an attempt to scrap and re-start the procurement of new Medicaid managed care contracts, while supporting the restoration of student wellness funding as a standalone item, among other positions on the latest substitute budget bill.

During a virtual meeting organized by Advocates for Ohio's Future, a coalition of human services nonprofits, members opposed Senate changes to pending biennial budget bill HB110 (Oelslager) in the areas of education, taxation, Medicaid services, child care and broadband expansion, with speakers saying that the changes leave behind poorer Ohioans.

Leaders in a range of Ohio human services organizations voiced continued concerns about the Senate version of the budget Monday, asking who would benefit. They specifically discussed areas of quality child care, broadband expansion, the Medicaid procurement process and a proposed 5 percent tax cut. The press conference was organized by Advocates for Ohio's Future (AOF) and the Ohio Children's Budget Coalition (OCBC).

The Senate Finance Committee made numerous final changes Tuesday to the biennial budget bill, HB110 (Oelslager), via an omnibus amendment and then voted to send the bill to the floor. Among additions in the omnibus amendment were \$50 million in federal grants for reduced child care co-pays, \$10 million for children services agencies, expanding the pathway out of academic distress for all three districts now under state oversight and providing \$125 million in federal funding for afterschool programming. Meanwhile, backers of the House school funding formula again urged adoption of their proposal and raised questions about elements of the Senate plan unveiled last week in a substitute version of HB110.

The Senate passed its version of the biennial operating budget Wednesday on a party-line vote, with much of the lengthy floor

debate focused on the chamber's school funding formula as compared to the House plan. The chamber voted 25-8 to approve HB110 with no further changes beyond the omnibus amendment adopted Tuesday, though Democrats sought numerous floor amendments that all fell to tabling motions.

Teachers, parents, and other community leaders gathered in the Ohio Statehouse Ladies' Gallery Wednesday to once again urge lawmakers to include the Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP) in the biennial budget over the Senate's school funding proposal. Attendees were part of the All in For Ohio Kids Coalition, which includes the Ohio Education Association, Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Organizing Collaborative, Policy Matters Ohio, and other community members. The group held their rally just a few hours before Senate members were scheduled to take up their version of the operating budget, HB110, on the Senate floor.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

The Business First Caucus held its final meeting before summer break Tuesday, though co-chair Rep. Craig Riedel (R-Defiance) commented that members will have a busy schedule in the fall including two October meetings and one each in November and December. Riedel said fall caucus meetings and speakers will include Oct. 12 with former restaurant CEO Andrew Puzder; Oct. 19 with Marathon Oil; Nov. 16 with the Ohio Manufacturers' Association; and Dec. 7 with a small robotics company in Northwest Ohio. Those four dates are all Tuesdays.

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Helping infants and families affected by substance use is "a top priority" of his administration, Gov. Mike DeWine said Monday. "It's a problem that I have seen for many years, and that is children who are exposed before birth to drugs and alcohol, and we all know the ramifications of that," DeWine said during his administration's "Pathways to Community Plans of Safe Care" event. The purpose of the event was to offer an update on the state's efforts to comply with the federal Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) as it relates to addressing neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) plans of care, said Kristi Burre, DeWine's director of children's initiatives.

Panelists at the Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus Monday meeting reviewed the health status of Ohio children and advocated for funding for preventive services in the biennial budget, HB110 (Oelslager) Drawing from the recently released 2021 Health Value Dashboard report, Health Policy Institute of Ohio (HPIO) Vice President Reem Aly said Ohio continues to rank near the bottom of states on health outcomes for citizens -- meaning Ohioans are living less healthy lives and spending more on health care than people in most other states.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Sen. Nickie Antonio (D-Lakewood) Thursday joined Columbus City Council President Shannon Hardin and his recently adopted infant son and Stonewall Democrats of Central Ohio Vice President Pat Deering in a virtual news conference to mark June as Pride Month and to draw attention to efforts to pass the Ohio Fairness Act, and to oppose legislation being considered in the General Assembly that they said "punishes" the state's transgender youth seeking to participate in sports.

CORONAVIRUS

Gov. Mike DeWine Monday appealed to Ohioans who have yet to be vaccinated to do so now, as 200,000 doses of the one-shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine are set to expire in just over two weeks on Wednesday, June 23. DeWine issued an urgent communication to vaccine providers Monday asking them to distribute as many doses as possible. He said Ohio does not have legal options for sending the vaccine either to other states or to other countries.

Mark Cline from Richwood (Union County) is the latest \$1 million winner in the DeWine administration's Vax-a-Million program and Sara Afaneh from Sheffield Lake (Lorain County) is the third student to win a full-ride scholarship including four years of tuition, books, and room and board at an Ohio public university or college. This week's drawing included nearly 3.4 million adult entries in the drawing for \$1 million, while more than 143,000 Ohioans ages 12 to 17 entered the drawing for a college scholarship. That marks an increase of 136,414 adult entries and 10,701 scholarship entries from the previous week.

State Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff of the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) recently voiced concern over what he called unfounded fears that COVID-19 vaccination presents greater risks than not getting vaccinated at all. He joined with Ohio State Medical Association (OSMA) President Dr. Lisa Egbert and urologist Dr. Neel Parekh of the Cleveland Clinic Monday to address Internet rumors that available coronavirus vaccines can trigger disease or cause infertility, along with more "imaginative" claims.

CORRECTIONS

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) is taking a page from the Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) and law enforcement agencies around the state by adopting body-worn cameras for security officers under a pilot program at four detention centers. The initiative launched with the Ohio State Penitentiary (OSP) and Chillicothe Correctional Institution (CCI) on Monday and will follow with the Cleveland Adult Parole Authority (APA) and Montgomery Unit of the Dayton APA next week.

EDUCATION

Monday's meeting of the State Board of Education Budget Committee focused largely on a review of federal education spending in the state. Aaron Rausch, budget director for the Ohio Department of Education, led a presentation on the federal spending. Rausch said federal funding usually constitutes about \$2 billion per fiscal year, but was at \$2.55 billion from COVID-10 relief funding and is now around \$3 billion this fiscal year with Gov. Mike DeWine's recent signing of HB170 (Bird-Richardson). Rausch said federal funding

is expected to be substantially above the \$2 billion figure as a result of various COVID packages passed by Congress.

The Columbus City Schools Board of Education voted recently to sign on to a planned lawsuit to challenge the constitutionality of Ohio's school voucher system, bringing the state's largest school district into the effort. Board members Eric Brown, Michael Cole, Tina Pierce, Ramona Reyes, Jennifer Adair and Carol Beckerle supported the resolution, while James Ragland opposed it.

ELECTIONS

The House Government Oversight Committee Thursday reported out HB149 (Swearingen-Stewart) on a party-line vote to require party identification of candidates for the Ohio Supreme Court and courts of appeals in the general election following an effort by Rep. Tavia Galonski (D-Akron) to remove the bill language by amendment. HB149 and its companion bill, SB80 (Gavarone-Cirino), has also been included in the Senate's substitute budget bill which passed that chamber Wednesday. SB80 was also passed by the Senate in April.

ELECTIONS 2021

Citing the fundraising demands needed in a short time, Rep. Brian Stewart (R-Ashville) announced Friday that he was suspending his campaign for the 15th Congressional District.

Former President Donald Trump Tuesday endorsed Republican Mike Carey in the 15th Congressional District Republican primary to succeed former U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers, who retired last month to head the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.

The Ohio Working Families Party, Columbus Stand Up!, and Our Revolution Central Ohio announced that a caravan will go from Columbus to Akron on Saturday, June 12 in support of Nina Turner ahead of an 11th Congressional District debate. The district is up for a special election primary on Tuesday, Aug. 3, to replace former U.S. Rep. Marica Fudge, now the secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Turner, a former state senator, is one of 13 Democrats seeking the seat.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- The 15th Congressional District campaign of Bob Peterson announced the endorsement of Pickaway County Commissioners Jay Wippel and Champ Henson; Pickaway County Engineer Chris Mullins; Pickaway County Prosecutor Judy Wolford; Pickaway County Sheriff Matthew Hafey; Pickaway County Treasurer Ellery Elick; Pickaway County Republican Party Chairman Mike Whitten; Pickaway County Republican Party Vice-Chair Sandy Darby; Ashville Mayor Chuck Wise; Circleville Council members Sheri Theis, Barry Keller, Katie Logan Hedges, Michele Blanton, and Todd Brady; Ashville Councilman Nelson Embrey; Circleville Mayor Don McIlroy; Commercial Point Mayor Allan Goldhardt; Walnut Township Trustee Wilson Ett; former Pickaway County Sheriff Robby Radcliff; and former Pickaway County Prosecutor Bill Harsha. Pickaway County Commissioner Gary Scherer previously endorsed Peterson.
- The congressional campaign of Ruth Edmonds announced the endorsement of Right Women PAC.

ELECTIONS 2022

Ohio Supreme Court Justice Jennifer Brunner became the first candidate in the race to succeed Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor in next year's race, but is likely to face one of her colleagues on the ballot for the top Court position. O'Connor is ineligible to run again in 2022 due to age limits. In addition to Brunner, Justices Sharon Kennedy and Pat DeWine have been exploring potential runs to replace her. Additionally, DeWine's seat on the Court and Justice Pat Fischer will also be on the ballot in 2022 as Republicans hold a 4-3 advantage on the Court.

Former U.S. Rep. Jim Renacci officially entered the 2022 GOP gubernatorial primary Wednesday, challenging incumbent Gov. Mike DeWine and "constitutional conservative" candidate Joe Blystone, a farmer. Renacci previously ran in the 2018 Republican gubernatorial primary before entering that year's U.S. Senate race.

Gov. Mike DeWine, asked about his reaction to Wednesday's news that Renacci will oppose him in the gubernatorial primary next year, reiterated what he has said before: that rarely in his political career has he not had a primary. He went on to say that no one has had more news conferences or been out there more than he has. He said the state is "putting the pandemic in the rearview mirror" and "coming out strong." DeWine tied that to steps taken early during the pandemic when he cut spending and froze hiring. "We're doing well" he said of the state.

Another advisor to former President Donald Trump will be traveling to Ohio to campaign with a congressional candidate. Republican U.S. Senate candidate Bernie Moreno's campaign announced that Kellyanne Conway will be campaigning with Moreno at noon on Tuesday, June 15, at Columbia Station, OH.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The national unemployment rate dropped 0.3 percentage points in May after national total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 559,000 jobs over the month, rebounding from a weaker April report. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the number of unemployed persons fell by 496,000 to 9.3 million in May. While the measures are down from the highs set early in the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers remain well above the pre-pandemic levels, when the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent and the number of unemployed persons was 5.7 million.

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), total employment is predicted to increase at an annual rate of 2.82 percent for the next six months in Ohio.

For the week ending June 5, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 16,224 initial unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). That number is higher than last week, when the department reported 13,955 new jobless claims. Ohioans filed 198,692 continued traditional unemployment claims last week, which was 23,299 fewer than the previous week, ODJFS said.

ENERGY/UTILITIES

Speaking for the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), the Ohio attorney general said the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) proposed 2 percent electric billing charge for added cyber-security investments is "unjust and unreasonable" and would encourage electric distribution utilities (EDU) to invest in systems that may not be needed. FERC said cyber-attacks on public and private operations are "increasing in both occurrence and diversity," PUCO noted, warranting grid upgrades that exceed the North American Electric Reliability Corporation's (NERC) Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) standards for the bulk power system.

American Electric Power's (AEP) stock price fell more than 3 percent Tuesday on word that U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) enforcement officials had subpoenaed records concerning "benefits to the company from the passage of 133-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin)."

Three more solar facilities will receive financial assistance under the state's Solar Generation Fund, the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) announced Tuesday. "As a result of HB128 (Hoops-Stein), the OAQDA acted to review and approve the applications for these facilities, which will join three other solar projects as part of the Solar Generation Fund," OAQDA Executive Director Christina O'Keeffe said. "We look forward to supporting these solar facilities as part of the growing renewable energy industry in the state of Ohio."

Ohio business leaders raised concerns with the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee Tuesday about Michigan's efforts to close the Enbridge Line 5, a major oil pipeline that passes through the Great Lakes states. The committee held its second hearing on SR41 (Yuko-Gavarone), which urges Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to keep the pipeline operating. A similar resolution, HR13 (Sheehy), was adopted by the House in March, and legislators from both chambers and parties held a May press briefing on the issue as well.

ENVIRONMENT

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) is now accepting applications for Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) grants. Entities can apply for the grants through Thursday, July 15, Ohio EPA said. OEEF grants are available for projects targeting the regulated community, general public, and students and teachers from kindergarten through higher education. The summer grant cycle includes both mini grants (from \$500 to \$5,000) and general grants (up to \$50,000). A virtual information session will be held for prospective applicants on Thursday, June 24 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Registration is not required.

FEDERAL

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) Tuesday said he is proud of the bipartisan effort that went into a report released this week that examined the intelligence, equipment and training failures related to the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 that led to the deaths of five people, including a Capitol police officer. The report was authored by Portman, the ranking member of the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, along with Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI), Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). The report highlighted what it said were a number of failures leading up to and on Jan. 6 that allowed for the Capitol to be breached by supporters of President Donald Trump. The senators said the breakdowns ranged from federal intelligence agencies failing to warn of a potential for violence to a lack of planning and inadequate preparation by the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) and law enforcement.

Noting that 3,800 children in Ohio tested for high lead levels in 2018 and that many homes in the state still contain lead, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) highlighted a federal bill he has sponsored with U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) and others that would require lead testing for children who are enrolled in Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Brown said testing ensures that children will get the follow up care they need and will help to identify lead hazards. He told reporters on a conference call that he hopes to insert the bill into an infrastructure bill or will explore other pieces of legislation to include it as part of a larger package, adding that there has not been any opposition to the bill so far.

GAMING/GAMBLING

The Senate Select Committee on Gaming is planning to accept final amendments to sports gambling legalization bill SB176 (Antani-Manning) and then vote it out on Tuesday, June 15, Chairman Kirk Schuring (R-Canton) said Thursday. Schuring reiterated that the intent is "to get something done by June 30." To that end, Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) said after Thursday's House session some members of the House have already been talking to senators about the bill.

Ohio's gambling industry continued to report robust revenues in May 2021 after setting records in recent months. Total sales from traditional lottery products were \$384.3 million, which is \$32.1 million more than May 2020, Ohio Lottery Finance Director Greg Bowers told the Ohio Lottery Commission (OLC) this week. "This represents the highest sales recorded for the month of May, and the fourth highest for any month since the lottery's inception," Bowers said. "The increase can be attributed to draw-based games, which increased nearly \$40 million, or 29.4 percent, over last year. All draw-based games except Pick 3 were higher than last May."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

The House Rules and Reference Committee debated what if any limits exist on the chamber's authority to expel a colleague for "disorderly conduct" and distinctions between that process and criminal proceedings, as the House finally brought internal debates on Rep. Larry Householder's (R-Glenford) future out in the open. The committee heard sponsor testimony Thursday on two resolutions -- both introduced this week -- seeking to expel Householder because of his involvement in the 133-HB6 scandal: HR69, sponsored by Reps. Brian Stewart (R-Ashville) and Mark Fraizer (R-Newark), and HR70, sponsored by Reps. Michele Lepore-Hagan (D-Youngstown) and Jeffrey Crossman (D-Parma). A further hearing is scheduled for 4 p.m. Tuesday, when Householder is invited to appear. House Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima), who chairs the committee, said the panel will also accept written comments if Householder so chooses. Cupp simply described the process and recognized members for questions during Thursday's two-hour hearing, posing no questions of his own to the resolutions' sponsors. He has repeatedly called for Householder to resign in the past.

In addition to passing its version of the FY22-23 budget, HB110 (Oelslager) Wednesday, the Senate also passed a few other measures unanimously and with little discussion:

- **SB153** (Hoagland), expanding a program to use transcranial magnetic stimulation to treat substance abuse disorders and mental illnesses for veterans and first responders.
- **SB160** (O'Brien), requiring long-term care facilities, health care caseworkers, home health and hospice agencies and others to inform veterans in their care about the availability of health care and financial benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- **SB181** (Gavarone), barring restrictions on religious attire in school athletics, a response to the well-publicized disqualification of a Muslim student who wore a head covering during a high school cross country race.

The House Thursday refused to agree to Senate changes on two budget bills, sending both to conference committees to work out the differences. Rep. Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton) urged a non-concurrence on both of the measures he'd sponsored -- HB75 (Oelslager), the workers' compensation budget, and

HB110 (Oelslager), the biennial budget. On HB75, he said he appreciated that the changes the Senate made are budget-focused, but said there are provisions that need more discussion, including an amendment he said walks back language recently approved by both chambers and signed by the governor. The House vote was 30 to 59 to not concur.

The vote not to concur on the Senate's version of HB110 was closer to unanimous, with seven Republicans voting to concur. Oelslager said there are "hundreds of competing ideas" added by each chamber that need to be worked out. Senate changes to the bill included removing the Fair School Funding Plan, a new funding formula that Speaker Bob Cupp (R-Lima) helped to develop. Cupp told reporters after session that the plan is "very important to the House," but said they will have to review the Senate plan. He said he wants to see the budget include a comprehensive funding plan for schools, adding that it needs to be transparent and work for Ohio schools while providing each student the opportunity for education. He called the Fair School Funding Plan a "historic opportunity" to make changes to the way the state funds schools. The vote on concurrence was 8-86.

The House also passed the following bills on Thursday:

- **HB82** (Cross-D. Jones), permitting high school students to opt out of taking a nationally standardized college admissions assessment such as the SAT or ACT, which passed 94-0.
- **HB96** (Merrin), allowing for permanent registration for non-commercial trailers, which passed 73-19.
- **HB105** (Lipps-Kelly), providing age-appropriate student instruction in child sexual abuse and sexual violence prevention, which passed 86-8.
- **HB163** (Cutrona-Sweeney), barring hospitals from requiring nurses to work mandatory overtime as a condition of continued employment, which passed 82-12.
- **HB190** (Ginter-A.Miller), prohibiting a war relic located on public property or cemetery association property from being sold, disturbed or otherwise disposed of, except under certain circumstances, which passed 92-2.
- **HR56** (Pavliga-Grendell, urging Congress to eliminate the E-check program, which passed 62-29.
- **SB21** (Antonio-Manning), establishing stroke patient protocols for emergency medical services, which passed 91-0.
- **SB42** (Schaffer), designating the second week of November as "Ohio Diabetes Awareness-Heart Connection Week," which passed 90-0.
- **SCR1** (Schaffer), urging Congress to enact the Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act, which passed 89-0.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Ohio State Medical Board took steps to delay a review Monday by the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) on recently enacted policies and whether those policies should be rules. Both agencies were scheduled to appear before the panel Monday to explain those policies, but JCARR Chair Jamie Callender (R-Concord) explained that action would be deferred based on steps taken by the agencies.

Monday's notice from the House clerk on session plans included an additional disclaimer: "Please note that, beginning with the session this Thursday, June 10, members will be seated at their assigned seats on the floor and will be using the vote buttons on their desks to register their votes. The iPads will no longer be used during voting session."

The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board said Monday the entrance to the Ohio Statehouse on the State Street side will be open to the public during weekday business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., beginning this week. The State Street doors will be closed on weekends.

In other legislative action, House Health Committee reported out SB3 (Roegner), regarding the Nurse Licensure Compact; and HB281 (Jarrells-Young), regarding terminology on mental health and disabilities; House Transportation and Public Safety Committee reported out HB138 (Baldrige), regarding emergency medical services; HB308 (Brown), a license plate bill; and HB204 (Click), a road naming bill; House Ways and Means Committee reported out HB197 (Stoltzfus-Creech), regarding tax credits for commercial vehicle training; Senate Veterans and Public Safety Committee reported out HCR7 (John-Kick), urging the federal government to maintain the C-130 fleet; the House Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee reported out HB238 (Hicks-Hudson-Crawley) to designate July 28 as Buffalo Soldiers Day; the House Commerce and Labor Committee reported out SB49 (Hottinger-Sykes) which deals with registered design professionals; and HB 187 (Kelly-Lipps) which requires the provision of earnings/deductions statements by employers; and the House Government Oversight Committee reported out HB149 (Swearingen-Stewart) which requires party designation for certain judicial candidates.

GOVERNOR

During his Thursday briefing, Gov. Mike DeWine came out against HB248 (Gross), the "Vaccine Choice and Anti-Discrimination Act" which drew heavy testimony Tuesday in the House Health Committee -- testimony that has landed the state in the national media for the conspiracy theories espoused by two of the witnesses and the misinformation that was proffered. DeWine stressed the strides that vaccinations have made in changing and saving lives over the years, hearkening back to his childhood when people were "terrified" of contracting polio. "Polio is eradicated," he noted, as are measles, mumps, whooping cough and tetanus for the most part. "It is easy to forget where we would be without these vaccines," he added.

Gov. Mike DeWine announced Friday the appointment of Brian Driscoll to Clark County Municipal Court, replacing Judge Denise Moody. Driscoll will have to run in November in order to complete the term ending Dec. 31, 2025. Then on Wednesday he announced the judicial appointment of former state Sen. John J. Eklund to the Eleventh District Court of Appeals. Eklund, of Chardon, will assume office on July 1, 2021, and will be replacing Judge Matt Lynch. He will need to run for election in November 2022 in order to complete the unexpired term ending Feb. 8, 2025.

Gov. Mike DeWine signed three bills Tuesday:

- **SB4** (Roegner), expanding the list of professionals whose personal information is exempt from public records laws
- **SB27** (Hottinger), authorizing automatic enrollment of employees in the state's deferred compensation program.
- **SB30** (Dolan), designating Aug. 31 as "Ohio Overdose Awareness Day"

Appointments made during the week include the following:

- Elsa Kahn of Youngstown (Mahoning County) as a student member on the Youngstown State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending April 30, 2023.
- Anita A. Hackstedde of Columbiana (Columbiana County) reappointed to the Youngstown State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending April 30, 2030.
- Joshua D. Auten of Pickerington (Franklin County) to serve as a student member on the Bowling Green State University Board of Trustees for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending May 17, 2023.
- Douglas L. Fortkamp of Sidney (Shelby County) to the Edison State Community College Board of Trustees for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Jan. 17, 2025.
- Manish Valiathan of Pepper Pike (Cuyahoga County) to the Radiation Advisory Council for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Sept. 6, 2025.
- Michael Hall of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Capital Square Review and Advisory Board for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and continuing at the pleasure of the governor.
- Timothy L. Miller of North Royalton (Cuyahoga County) and Amista N. Lipot of Beverly (Washington County) reappointed to the Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism terms beginning June 4, 2021, and ending April 21, 2024.
- Matt Warren of Columbus (Franklin County) to the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Feb. 6, 2023.
- Avraham L. Goldstein of Columbus (Franklin County) and S. Zaheer Hasan of Waterville (Lucas County) reappointed to the Advisory Board of the Governor's Office of Faith-Based Community Initiatives for terms beginning June 4, 2021, and ending May 4, 2022.
- Janice H. Buchele of Toledo (Lucas County) reappointed to the Real Estate Appraiser Board for a term beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2024.
- Terence P. Joyce of Cleveland (Cuyahoga County) to the Ohio Housing Finance Agency for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Jan. 31, 2023.
- F. Rose Hartschuh of Sycamore (Crawford County) to the Ohio Expositions Commission for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and

ending Dec. 1, 2026.

- Cara Dingus Brook of Logan (Hocking County) to the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority for a term beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2029.
- Fredrick W. Strahorn of Dayton (Montgomery County) to the State Personnel Board of Review for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Feb. 8, 2027.
- Kathleen L. Barrett of Dayton (Montgomery County) and Loren D. M. Pena of Cincinnati (Hamilton County) to the Rare Disease Advisory Council for terms beginning June 4, 2021, and ending April 22, 2023.
- Tiffany N. Sammons of Batavia (Clermont County) to the Rare Disease Advisory Council for a term beginning June 3, 2021, and ending April 22, 2023.
- Kara B. Ayers of Mason (Warren County) reappointed to the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending March 14, 2024.
- Thomas R. Winters of Columbus (Franklin County) reappointed to the State Racing Commission for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending March 31, 2025.
- Brian M. Chavez of Marietta (Washington County) to the Oil and Gas Commission for a term beginning June 4, 2021, and ending Oct. 14, 2025.

GREAT LAKES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) FFY22 budget proposal "for the first time includes sufficient funds for upland placement of dredged material at Fairport, Lorain, Conneaut and Toledo harbors," Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) Executive Director Joy Mulinex said this week.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Members of the Ohio Cancer Caucus heard a virtual presentation Monday on racial disparities in cancer rates from Electra Paskett, director of the Ohio State University Center for Cancer Health Equity, who said providing health care navigators to vulnerable patients can help ensure delivery of care. Paskett said one of the most important findings of her center is that some Black patients, especially those on Medicaid, are less likely to attend follow-up appointments than White patients. This can lead to higher mortality rates for breast, cervix and colon cancer, Paskett said, and one way to keep patients from falling through the cracks is by providing them health navigators

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council, which represents people with developmental disabilities and their families, is circulating a survey to gather information on transportation equity and access for people with disabilities in Ohio. The online version is available at <https://tinyurl.com/n7pccnm7>. Paper and phone formats are available by contacting ann.robinson@osumc.edu.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Marc Seigar will join the University of Toledo (UT) as the leader of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics effective Monday, Aug. 2, the university announced.

A group of Youngstown State University (YSU) trustees contributed a combined \$250,000 to create an endowed graduate fellowship in the new James P. Tressel Institute for Leadership and Teamwork, the university announced recently.

Alumni John and Catherine Seibyl have made a \$7.5 million commitment to Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) in support of multidisciplinary research in neurodegenerative diseases, like Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis, the university announced recently. The gift will be used collaboratively with the School of Medicine, from which John Seibyl graduated, and the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, where Catherin Seibyl graduated.

JUDICIAL

The Board of Commissioners for the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection has awarded \$36,000 in its latest restitution to victims of attorney theft, including the largest single payment of \$10,000 payment to a single victim of suspended Cuyahoga County lawyer John Walter Gold. Six former or suspended Ohio attorneys were found to have misappropriated client funds, including one who is now deceased.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Ohio National Guard and State Defense Force members will end their emergency assistance for foodbanks and warehouses on Friday, July 2, the state announced Friday. Gov. Mike DeWine activated hundreds of guard members in March 2020 near the start of the pandemic to help the transport, package and distribute emergency food assistance.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Ohio natural gas production from horizontal wells did not see the COVID-19 rebound in the new year that some industry observers had hoped for, with yields falling 41 billion cubic feet (CF) during January-March compared to fourth-quarter 2020, when shale gas volumes already had fallen 14 percent year-over-year since the end of 2019.

The free fishing weekend for Ohio residents is Saturday and Sunday, June 19-20, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife. Ohio residents may fish for free in any of Ohio's public waters, including Lake Erie and the Ohio River, during that weekend. It is the only weekend all year when those 16-years-old and older are not required to obtain a fishing license to fish in the state's public waters, ODNR said.

ODNR officially dedicated the St. Joseph River Floodplain Restoration and St. Joseph Confluence Reconnection projects in Williams County and a new H2Ohio wetland in Paulding County.

The H2Ohio projects in Williams County were completed in partnership with Black Swamp Conservancy and EnviroScience while Black Swamp Conservancy collaborated on the Paulding County project which restored wetland to help prevent harmful nutrient runoff into the Maumee State Scenic River.

PEOPLE

Clean Fuels Ohio announced Friday that it has hired Government Advantage Group "to enhance its effectiveness in educating and advocating for clean transportation advancements in Ohio on behalf of its members, stakeholders, and communities."

Strategic Public Partners (SPP) announced that company President John Campbell has been named partner. Campbell joined SPP in 2011 after serving as U.S. Sen. Rob Portman's (R-OH) central district director as well as his political director during the 2010 campaign. Prior to that, Campbell was the executive director of the Franklin County Republican Party, was on the staff of former Ohio Gov. Bob Taft and worked on several ballot initiative campaigns with SPP.

The Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) announced Wednesday that its board of directors had elected Whirlpool Vice President of Manufacturing Operations Dale Laws as OMA chairman for the next two years.

Shumaker Advisors announced that it has hired Ryan Walker, former chief of staff to U.S. Rep. Bob Latta (R-Bowling Green), to serve as the firm's senior vice president of federal affairs. Walker has worked on Capitol Hill for more than a decade and has extensive experience in public policy. Walker was Latta's chief of staff from 2008 to 2016 and also served as senior advisor to Latta in his role on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. After leaving the congressional office, he represented BP before Congress, the White House and executive branch agencies. Walker is also a former adjunct professor at the George Washington University (GWU) Graduate School of Political Management.

REDISTRICTING/REAPPORTIONMENT

Voting groups Wednesday sharply criticized a Senate budget provision to HB110 (Oelslager) that allows the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate to intervene in any case challenging maps drawn by the General Assembly or Ohio Redistricting Commission, saying it only allows majority Republicans to intervene in a lawsuit and hire legal counsel on the public dime. The groups also questioned whether the language portends a redistricting process that will create unfair maps in favor of Republicans.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) announced in a newsletter Monday that state chief information officer (CIO) Ervan Rodgers had stepped down to take an opportunity outside of government and is being replaced by interim CIO Katrina Flory.

TECHNOLOGY

Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the attorney general's office Greg Jackson appeared as a panelist for this week's Columbus Metropolitan Club's (CMC) forum focusing on the future of information technology. "When it comes to the trends of technology in the workforce, I think one of the first questions a lot of us ask is, 'are robots going to take my job and take over my role?' And I think that the real answer is, it depends," Jackson said, adding that it depends on a person's value to "the supply chain."

UTILITIES

The Office of Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) and the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) say FirstEnergy's promised refund of \$26 million plus interest in "decoupling" charges under 133-HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) is not enough, though OCC and OMA voice separate concerns in filings this week with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). OCC says FirstEnergy's offer to return the \$26 million-plus to customers over 12 months rather than in a single bill credit does not satisfy the meaning of "promptly" in 134-HB128 (Hoops-Stein), which reversed HB6 and ordered the decoupling refund.