

OHIO PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

Bill Information

HB3 AISHA'S LAW - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE *(BOYD J, CARRUTHERS S)*

To add domestic violence circumstances to the offenses of aggravated murder and endangering children, to establish local domestic violence high risk teams, and to require law enforcement officers to utilize a qualified lethality assessment screening tool to refer high risk victims to a local team.

CURRENT STATUS

12/2/2020 - Senate Judiciary, (Second Hearing)

HB27 PUBLIC MOTOR VEHICLE LIABILITY *(INGRAM C)*

To modify political subdivision liability for an employee's negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

CURRENT STATUS

3/19/2019 - House Civil Justice, (Third Hearing)

HB48 LOCAL GOVT ROAD IMPROVEMENT FUND *(GREENSPAN D)*

To provide for a new Local Government Road Improvement Fund for local governments to fund road improvements.

CURRENT STATUS

2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance

HB51 UNDIVIDED HIGHWAY RUMBLE STRIPS *(GINTER T)*

To require the Ohio Department of Transportation to install rumble strips along the center line for all two-way, undivided state highways with a speed limit exceeding 45 miles per hour, as a part of specified highway projects.

CURRENT STATUS

12/11/2019 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Second Hearing)

HB54 LGF TAX REVENUE INCREASE *(CERA J, ROGERS J)*

To increase the proportion of state tax revenue allocated to the Local Government Fund from 1.66% to 3.53% beginning July 1, 2019.

CURRENT STATUS

12/3/2020 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)

HB78 PREVAILING WAGE-PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS *(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

12/11/2019 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)

HB92 VOTE ON COUNTY SALES TAX *(ANTANI N, SMITH J)*

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

CURRENT STATUS

3/13/2019 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)

HB93 PUBLIC TRANSIT INVESTMENT *(SKINDELL M, UPCHURCH T)*

To make appropriations related to public transportation.

CURRENT STATUS

3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance

HB116 TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH *(BRINKMAN T)*

To make an appropriation related to transportation planning and research.

CURRENT STATUS

12/1/2020 - House Finance, (First Hearing)

HB148 YIELD TO PARALLEL PARKERS *(BRINKMAN T)*

To require drivers to yield the right of way to any other vehicle that is parking in or exiting an angled or parallel parking space on a public road.

CURRENT STATUS

4/2/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)

HB187 TAX ISSUES-AUGUST *(MERRIN D, WIGGAM S)*

To prohibit local tax-related proposals from appearing on an August special election ballot.

📌 CURRENT STATUS

4/10/2019 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government

HB202 ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE *(SMITH K, WEINSTEIN C)*

To establish the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Study Committee.

📌 CURRENT STATUS

12/1/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Sixth Hearing)

HB295 ELECTRIC SCOOTERS *(HOOPS J)*

To establish requirements governing low-speed electric scooters.

📌 CURRENT STATUS

2/12/2020 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED & REPORTED OUT**, Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Sixth Hearing)

HB309 ASSAULT-TRANSIT OPERATOR *(DENSON S, PERALES R)*

To increase the penalty for assault when the victim is an operator of an Ohio transit system bus or rail car; to authorize Ohio transit systems to post a sign regarding abuse or assault of staff; and to increase the penalty for evading payment of the known fares of a public transportation system.

📌 CURRENT STATUS

2/20/2020 - House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)

HB369 SEXUAL, GENDER DISCRIMINATION *(HILLYER B, SKINDELL M)*

To enact the Ohio Fairness Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, to add mediation as an informal method that the Ohio Civil Rights Commission may use, and to uphold existing religious exemptions under Ohio's Civil Rights Law.

📌 CURRENT STATUS

11/19/2020 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Civil Justice, (Third Hearing)

HB382 PROHIBIT INCOME TAX-MUNICIPAL NONRESIDENTS *(JORDAN K)*

To prohibit municipal corporations from levying an income tax on nonresidents' compensation for personal services or on net profits from a sole proprietorship owned by a nonresident.

🚩 CURRENT STATUS

11/6/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means

HB384 PERMITTING STOP SIGN REQUESTS *(BOGGS K, LELAND D)*

To permit a local resident, neighborhood association, or neighborhood organization to request the erection of a stop sign at an intersection and to support a request for a lower prima-facie speed limit on certain streets and highways.

🚩 CURRENT STATUS

6/2/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)

HB468 HANDHELD ELECTRONIC DEVICE WHILE DRIVING *(LIGHTBODY M)*

To alter the law governing the use of a handheld electronic wireless communications device while driving.

🚩 CURRENT STATUS

5/19/2020 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)

HB499 MOTOR FUEL TESTING PROGRAM *(KELLY B, LANG G)*

To authorize a county to implement a motor fuel quality testing program.

🚩 CURRENT STATUS

5/19/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)

HB501 ANIMAL-DRAWN VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS *(WIGGAM S, KICK D)*

To clarify the law governing slow-moving vehicles and to revise the lighting and reflective material requirements applicable to animal-drawn vehicles.

🚩 CURRENT STATUS

12/1/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Fourth Hearing)

HB510 CRIMINAL PENALTIES - VEHICLE SAFETY *(PATTON T)*

To increase the criminal penalties associated with failing to secure a load on a vehicle.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice

HB546 **REGISTRATION FEES - ELECTRIC VEHICLES** (MILLER J, WEINSTEIN C)

To alter the definitions of "plug-in electric motor vehicle" and "hybrid motor vehicle" under the motor vehicle law and to halve the additional registration fees for those two types of motor vehicles.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

11/17/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second Hearing)

HB550 **MOTORCYCLE SAFETY EDUCATION** (HOOPS J)

To make changes to the laws related to the motorcycle safety and education program.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

11/10/2020 - **REPORTED OUT**, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Third Hearing)

HB566 **INCREASE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND DISTRIBUTION** (ROGERS J, CROSSMAN J)

To increase the percentage of revenue to the General Revenue Fund distributed to the Local Government Fund and to declare an emergency.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance

HB570 **OPEN BIDDING DURING COVID-19** (BOGGS K)

To allow a county to purchase public health-related items and communication equipment without competitive bidding, solicit bids electronically, and open bids during a meeting held electronically during the period of the emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D, issued on March 9, 2020, and to declare an emergency.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government

HB581 **ADDRESS COVID-19 CONCERNS** (CALLENDER J)

To address immediate concerns related to COVID-19.

■ **CURRENT STATUS**

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Health

HB582 MAKE APPROPRIATIONS, REAPPROPRIATIONS *(CALLENDER J)*

To make appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, and capital reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2022.

CURRENT STATUS

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance

HB593 REQUIRED PAID LEAVE - COVID-19 *(BOYD J, BOGGS K)*

To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

12/1/2020 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)

HB600 AMBULANCE LICENSE EXPANSION *(BLAIR G, O'BRIEN M)*

To authorize a person who has had a valid commercial driver's license to drive an ambulance during the state of emergency due to COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety

HB601 MATHEW'S LAW *(PERALES R)*

To enact Matthew's Law, requiring public buildings to have at least one rest room facility with an adult changing station and authorizing an income tax credit for installation.

CURRENT STATUS

6/9/2020 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)

HB606 CIVIL IMMUNITY - COVID-19 TRANSMISSION *(GRENDALL D)*

To grant civil immunity to a person who provides services for essential businesses and operations for injury, death, or loss that was caused by the transmission of COVID-19 during the period of emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D, issued on March 9, 2020.

CURRENT STATUS

9/14/2020 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**

HB609 TEMPORARY TAX AMNESTY PROGRAM *(WEST T)*

To require the Tax Commissioner to administer a temporary amnesty program from August 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, with respect to delinquent state taxes and fees, and to repeal Section 1 of this act on January 1, 2021.

■ CURRENT STATUS

9/22/2020 - **BILL AMENDED**, Senate Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)

HB615 PROTECTIVE BARRIERS - SCHOOL BUSES *(SOBECKI L, MILLER J)*

To authorize the installation of protective barriers in school buses, to require the Director of Public Safety to adopt rules related to the barriers, and to declare an emergency.

■ CURRENT STATUS

5/26/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)

HB671 PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER LIMITS *(ABRAMS C, STEPHENS J)*

To establish limits on certain public health orders issued by boards of health and the Department of Health, to prohibit a licensing authority from taking disciplinary action against a licensee for engaging in permitted activities during a pandemic, and to declare an emergency.

■ CURRENT STATUS

6/9/2020 - House State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)

HCR17 EXPAND SNAP TO STRIKERS *(SOBECKI L, RUSSO A)*

Urging Congress to expand Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program eligibility to include the households of striking workers.

■ CURRENT STATUS

2/11/2020 - House Health, (First Hearing)

HCR21 OHIO LOVES TRANSIT DAY *(LEPORE-HAGAN M, GREENSPAN D)*

To declare February 14, 2020, as "Ohio Loves Transit Day" and encourage all Ohioans to participate in the events taking place across Ohio during the week of and on February 14, 2020, to celebrate the importance of public transit in Ohio.

■ CURRENT STATUS

1/28/2020 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)

HCR31 DECLARE RACISM PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS *(HOWSE S, CRAWLEY E)*

To declare racism a public health crisis and to ask the Governor to establish a working group to promote racial equity in Ohio.

CURRENT STATUS

6/3/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government

SB132 GAS TAX-LOCAL GOVERNMENT ALLOCATION *(WILLIAMS S)*

To modify the amount of revenue derived from any increase in the motor fuel tax rate that is allocated to local governments and to change the manner in which that revenue is divided between municipal corporations, counties, and townships.

CURRENT STATUS

5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce

SB134 PASSING SCHOOL BUSES *(GAVARONE T)*

To make changes to the law governing passing a school bus, to create a new offense for vehicular homicide and vehicular assault related to improperly passing a stopped school bus, to make an appropriation, and to designate this the School Bus Safety Act.

CURRENT STATUS

5/19/2020 - House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)

SB285 DISTRACTED DRIVING *(O'BRIEN S, KUNZE S)*

To revise the laws relative to distracted driving and the use of an electronic wireless communications device while driving.

CURRENT STATUS

9/22/2020 - Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs, (Third Hearing)

SB291 ELECTRIC VEHICLE FEES *(LEHNER P, HOTTINGER J)*

To provide for the proration of the plug-in electric and hybrid motor vehicle registration fees.

CURRENT STATUS

5/6/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce

SB293 OPEN MEETINGS LAW COMPLAINTS *(MANNING N, BLESSING III L)*

To create a procedure within the Court of Claims to hear complaints alleging a violation of the Open Meetings Law.

CURRENT STATUS

11/10/2020 - House Civil Justice, (First Hearing)

SB299 REQUIRE PAID LEAVE (CRAIG H)

To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

5/6/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance

SB307 SALES TAX EXEMPTION-PPE (GAVARONE T)

To authorize a temporary sales and use tax exemption for personal protective equipment and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

6/9/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)

SB308 CIVIL LIABILITY-EMERGENCY SERVICES (HUFFMAN M)

To revise the law governing immunity from civil liability and professional discipline for health care providers during disasters or emergencies, to provide qualified civil immunity to service providers providing services during and after a government-declared disaster, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

6/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice

SB310 FEDERAL COVID FUNDING (DOLAN M)

To provide for the distribution of some federal coronavirus relief funding to local subdivisions, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

CURRENT STATUS

11/12/2020 - Senate Appoints Managers; M. Dolan, D. Burke & V. Sykes Named as Senate Conferees

SB322 NON-RECOURSE CIVIL LITIGATION ADVANCES (WILSON S)

To amend the law regarding the non-recourse civil litigation advance business.

CURRENT STATUS

6/10/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary

SB348 LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH (SCHAFFER T, ROEGNER K)

To prohibit local boards of health from using certain threatening words in notifications to the public, to allow local boards of health to reject Department of Health orders during an emergency, to allow health care professionals who serve on a board of health to receive continuing education credit, and to change the makeup of local boards of health.

CURRENT STATUS

9/1/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid

SB350 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION VOUCHERS FOR STUDENTS (BRENNER A)

To prohibit school districts from providing vouchers for public transportation to students enrolled in grades kindergarten through eight for the 2020-2021 school year.

CURRENT STATUS

11/17/2020 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)

SJR3 REQUIRE SUPERMAJORITY-INCOME TAX INCREASE (BURKE D)

Proposing to enact Section 7 of Article XII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to require that any increase in income tax rates be approved by a supermajority of the membership of each house of the General Assembly.

CURRENT STATUS

6/9/2020 - **REPORTED OUT**, Senate Ways and Means, (Sixth Hearing)

Week in Review

ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Researchers from Ohio University (OU) recently published a study analyzing what hospitals are doing to combat the ongoing opioid epidemic and giving strategies for how they could better address the problem in communities. The study, led by Berkeley Franz, assistant professor at the OU Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, is published in *Public Health Reports*, the official journal of the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General and the U.S. Public Health Service.

AGING

Volunteers trained in "friendly caller" techniques will be available to long-term care residents for conversations through the holidays, part of a project from Medicaid and area agencies on aging (AAA) to counteract the isolating effects of the pandemic. With widespread viral spread and the majority of Ohio deaths suffered by residents of long-term care facilities, pandemic restrictions meant to prevent further spread are also leading to "increased loneliness and despair," the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) said.

AGRICULTURE

The Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers Association (OCWGA) announced it supports the efforts of U.S. Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-Cleveland) to become secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the Biden administration. Fudge has told media outlets that her experience overseeing food and nutrition programs during her time in Congress gives her the experience necessary to lead the agency. She has served on the U.S. House Agriculture Committee since 2011.

ARTS, SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

A total of 296 of the state's performing and cultural arts organizations are in the process of receiving \$20 million in much-needed funding through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, according to Ohio Arts Council (OAC) Executive Director Donna Collins. "We're nearly through that whole process. We expect that every grant award will be made by [Tuesday] afternoon," Collins told *Hannah News* in an interview. "Record time -- less than 30 days."

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Dave Yost announced a \$17.5 million agreement with big box giant Home Depot Tuesday to settle its six-year-old data breach. The security failure exposed 40 million consumers' payment card information and triggered a nationwide investigation involving 46 states and the District of Columbia after Home Depot revealed the hack in 2014.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Secretary of State Frank LaRose said that with 15,470 new business filings in October, Ohio has already surpassed the record total for the entirety of 2019. Ohioans have submitted a total of 145,157 new business filings this year versus last year's record of 130,621 new filings from January to December.

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

Gov. Mike DeWine asked lawmakers to prioritize children's services and foster care in future budgets during a news conference Friday morning highlighting the release of a report and recommendations from the governor's Children's Services Transformation Advisory Council. The governor said it will be important for the state to financially support children's services, which are administered at the county level, given the scope of challenges the system currently faces.

CORONAVIRUS

Gov. Mike DeWine held a press conference Monday with hospital executives to again urge Ohioans to take precautions during the Thanksgiving holiday as the state continues to set records with what DeWine called a "runaway freight train" in the spreading COVID-19 virus. The press conference came as the state shattered the record for the daily reported caseload of the coronavirus, with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) reporting 11,885 new cases in the last 24 hours. However, DeWine said Monday's jump was likely in part related to issues at testing labs at Mercy Health and the Cleveland Clinic over the weekend, which caused those test reports to be delayed until Monday. But he said Ohio is still averaging 8,500 new cases in recent days.

The public rise in COVID-19 cases is driving a spike in long-term care (LTC) facilities nationally, according to a Monday release from the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA-NCAL), and the latest Ohio Department of Health (ODH) weekly data show an increase of 908 new current cases among LTC facility residents and staff. The numbers released by ODH Wednesday, which cover Nov. 11 to Nov. 17, show 2,639 current resident cases and 2,359 staff cases for a total of 4,998. The previous week's data, covering Nov. 4 to Nov. 10, had 2,323 resident cases and 1,767 staff cases, totaling 4,090.

Lack of adherence to recommendations on Thanksgiving gatherings in the coming days could lead to a "real disaster" in terms of the level of COVID-19 spread in Ohio by mid-December, Gov. Mike DeWine said Tuesday. This could, in turn, could affect holiday gatherings that month as well, he added. Hospitals are already "filling up," he continued, adding that the growth in the number of cases will lead to an economic slowdown as well. Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, chief medical officer for the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), said the current increase is due in part to gatherings around Halloween and that Thanksgiving gatherings pose an even greater threat which could leave hospitals "overwhelmed."

Gov. Mike DeWine's request for a full federal extension of the National Guard COVID-19 response has drawn support from the state's congressional delegation and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks (OAF), according to recent releases. Federal funding for the Ohio National Guard's pandemic response operations was previously extended at a 75 percent level in August, but that will expire at year's end without another extension.

EDUCATION

Education groups weighed in on the recent vote in the General Assembly to resolve an impasse over potential explosive growth in the list of schools where students are eligible for EdChoice vouchers. School Choice Ohio and the Fordham Institute praised the changes in SB89 (M. Huffman), while the Ohio School Boards Association, Ohio Association of School Business Officials and Buckeye Association of School Administrators expressed disappointments. The Ohio Federation of Teachers and Ohio Education Association urged Gov. Mike DeWine to veto the bill. Asked about the bill at his COVID briefing Tuesday, DeWine said only that he's reviewing the legislation.

During the pandemic, enrollment in high quality preschool programs in Cleveland tumbled to just half of where it had been several months earlier, early childhood education organization PRE4CLE notes in its annual report. The health and economic crisis has laid bare structural funding problems for early childhood education, and the sector will likely see mass closings without federal support in the near future, PRE4CLE Executive Director Katie Kelly told *Hannah News*.

The Ohio Department of Education announced recently the launch of the RemotEDx Exchange, which provides parents and educators of K-12 students access to supports, services and resources for remote education. The platform is part of the broader RemotEDX initiative, a \$15 million effort using federal CARES Act funding to improve remote, hybrid and blended learning. The exchange is available at <https://remotedx.infohio.org/>.

ELECTIONS 2020

Shortly before the federal General Services Administration (GSA) began the presidential transition process, Ohio's U.S. Sen. Rob Portman had written in a newspaper editorial that the GSA should release funding and provide infrastructure for an official transition to the administration of President-elect Joe Biden, saying "there is no evidence as of now of any widespread fraud or irregularities that would change the result in any state."

A new program between the secretary of state's office and the Ohio Supreme Court that offered Ohio attorneys continuing education credit for serving as poll workers was taken advantage of by 1,026 attorneys, Secretary of State Frank LaRose and the Court said Tuesday.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) said Friday that Ohio's unemployment rate for October dropped to 5.6 percent from a revised 8.3 percent in September as the state added 30,800 jobs over the month. ODJFS said the state's nonagricultural wage and salary employment went from a revised 5,191,500 in September to 5,222,300 in October 2020. The number of workers unemployed in Ohio in October was 324,000, down from 469,000 in September, ODJFS said. The number of unemployed has increased by 86,000 in the past 12 months from 238,000. The October unemployment rate for Ohio increased from 4.1 percent in October 2019.

Federal-State Extended Benefits (EB) will be discontinued on Saturday, Dec. 12 for individuals who were eligible to receive up to 20 weeks of the program, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced Tuesday. Additionally, individuals currently receiving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) will not qualify for seven additional PUA weeks after Dec. 12, according to ODJFS. "Ohio's October unemployment rate dropped drastically, triggering federally mandated changes in both the EB program and PUA," the department said.

ENERGY/ UTILITIES

Sam Randazzo resigned Friday as chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), following events over the week that raised questions about his connections to FirstEnergy and by inference to the HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) nuclear bailout scandal. Randazzo left with parting thoughts about the direction of Ohio's energy policy, while his critics attacked his clean energy stances and said the resignation is further proof of the need to repeal HB6. Federal agents searched Randazzo's Columbus home Monday, Nov. 16. FirstEnergy said in a federal Securities and Exchange Commission filing Thursday that its recent firing of ex-CEO Chuck Jones and other executives was tied to a \$4 million payment in 2019 to a company connected to an unnamed person "who subsequently was appointed to a full-time role as a government official directly involved in regulating the Ohio [FirstEnergy] companies, including with respect to distribution rates." Randazzo said the events would raise suspicion about decisions he'd make as chair, and said he didn't want to serve as a distraction to Gov. Mike DeWine during the challenges of the pandemic.

GAMING/GAMBLING

The Ohio Lottery is raking in revenue at record rates ahead of Thanksgiving and Christmas, Finance Director Greg Bowers told the Ohio Lottery Commission (OLC) during its most recent meeting. "We surpassed the \$1 billion sales mark for traditional sales on Oct. 1 of this year. That's the fastest of any point in our history. Typically, this happens toward the end of October, and last year we passed the \$1 billion mark on the 25th," Bowers said. "For the first four months of the fiscal year, total profits generated for the education fund were \$418.4 million, or \$27.3 million higher than our budget and \$23.7 million more than the first four months of the last fiscal year."

The state's four casinos and seven racinos will be closed between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. over the next three weeks in accordance with the DeWine administration's COVID-19 curfew order, spokespeople for the Ohio Casino Control Commission (OCCC) and Ohio Lottery Commission (OLC) told *Hannah News*.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

Rep. John Becker (R-Cincinnati) said he hasn't been on Capitol Square lately because he's at home sick with a number of symptoms consistent with COVID-19, though he did not mention the virus. "For those of you wondering or concerned, I've been sick for the past two weeks. It started with fatigue, sore throat, and mild congestion. At times, my throat felt like I had a razor blade caught in it. But it eventually passed. It was this past Saturday that I took a turn for the worst. With a fever of 102, I began sleeping about 22 hours a day. I've been immobile, incoherent, and unable to eat, read or write. My wife force-fed me dinner one night. My blood sugar level dropped and dehydration perpetuated the problem. My symptoms included chills, night sweats and cognitive impairment," Becker wrote on Facebook on Thursday, Nov. 19.

House Democrats announced Monday the re-election of Rep. Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) as minority leader for the 134th General Assembly. Also re-elected were Assistant Minority Leader Kristin Boggs (D-Columbus), Minority Whip Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) and Assistant Minority Whip Richard Brown (D-Canal Winchester). Newly elected to the team as caucus chair is Rep. Phil Robinson (D-Solon).

Rep. Thomas West (D-Canton) has been chosen by his colleagues to serve as president of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC) for the 134th General Assembly, succeeding Rep. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland). West was chosen as president following an official vote by OLBC members in the Ohio House and Senate. Other members of the OLBC leadership team are the following: First Vice President

Rep. Juanita Brent (D-Cleveland); Second Vice President Rep. Catherine Ingram (D-Cincinnati); Treasurer Rep. Erica Crawley (D-Columbus); Sergeant-at-Arms Sen. Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus); Secretary Rep. Sedrick Denson (D-Cincinnati); and Parliamentarian Sen. Vernon Sykes (D-Akron).

GOVERNOR

Gov. Mike DeWine signed two bills related to COVID-19 Monday, one of which extends numerous temporary policies put in place because of disruptions from the pandemic. Originally written to allow university trustees to meet electronically, HB404 (Manchester-Sweeney) was amended in the Senate to extend through July 1, 2021 the ability for public bodies to meet and hold hearings remotely, as well as exemptions to school meal requirements and deadlines for renewing various state licenses, among other provisions. DeWine also signed HB151 (Carfagna), which temporarily grants qualified civil immunity to health care isolation centers to protect medical professionals from liability claims throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill also expands the authority of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to provide medical services in hospitals, if needed.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

A study committee created to examine drug pricing voted Monday on recommendations to include in its initial report, urging consideration of pooled government purchasing and attention to equity concerns, among other topics. The Prescription Drug Transparency and Affordability Council took up a staff draft including seven recommendations and edited it down to six, after concern from business groups surfaced about a lack of detail on one element of the draft version.

JUDICIAL

Finding the state's application of former Senate President Keith Faber's public records overhaul to be less than "expeditious and economical" -- the stated goal of 131-SB321 -- the Ohio Supreme Court ordered Jefferson County officials to fulfill the Associated Press's three-year-old records request for security footage of Judge Joseph Bruzzese's deadly shootout with a father in the Steubenville rape case. The Court unanimously ruled that government surveillance video is not a protected "security record" without clear and convincing evidence the footage has a direct rather than indirect use in protecting a public office from attack, "regardless of whatever perceived limitations or vulnerabilities the [state] believes might be revealed by public viewing of the video."

LIQUOR/ALCOHOL

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) cited five liquor establishments for violating pandemic-related health orders in recent days, according to releases sent Friday and Sunday.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Attorney General Dave Yost said Monday that he has initiated proceedings in the Ohio Supreme Court to suspend Alexander "P.G." Sittenfeld from his position on Cincinnati City Council following federal indictments on public corruption charges. Sittenfeld, a one-time candidate for U.S. Senate in Ohio who was seeking to run for Cincinnati mayor, was charged last week by federal authorities, who alleged that Sittenfeld took bribes in 2018 and 2019 and promised to "deliver the votes" on a development project before city council.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Mansfield-Lahm Airport, current home of the Ohio Air National Guard (OANG) 179th Airlift Wing, is now one of two sites under consideration for the Air National Guard Information Warfare (Cyber) Wing (IWW), according to the Adjutant General's Department.

The Dayton Development Coalition and defense firm Infinity Labs announced that the company had secured three U.S. Air Force contracts in the Agility Prime program, which seeks to "accelerate the commercial market for advanced air mobility vehicles."

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Buckeye State's mineral resources produced more than \$1.5 billion worth of geologic commodities in 2019, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). The state's mineral resources were valued similarly in 2018.

PEOPLE

Former Rep. John Schlichter died Thursday, Nov. 19 from what media outlets reported as a possible heart attack. He was 62. He served the 85th District in the Ohio House from 2003 to 2009, and had previously been a Fayette County commissioner, and also worked as the deputy director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Most recently, he was serving at the executive director of the Ohio Oil and Gas Energy Education Program (OOGEEP).

STATE GOVERNMENT

Following four late additions of state government spending requests to the Controlling Board agenda, the board approved all agenda items at Monday's meeting. Added items included a \$38 million spending request from the Ohio Emergency Management Agency with funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance Program to assist nonprofit hospitals; a \$1.2 million request from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) with funds from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund to support the Ohio Distance Learning Initiative; a \$28 million request from the Office of Budget and Management to improve indoor air quality at nursing homes and adult day cares; and a \$7 million transfer of funds from the Department of Administrative Services to the Adjutant General's office to support COVID-19 relief efforts.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

According to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), the expiration date of Ohio driver's licenses, identification cards, and vehicle registrations has been extended until July 1, 2021 after Gov. Mike DeWine signed HB404 (Manchester-Sweeney) this week.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The estimated net position of \$5.9 billion that the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) will hold after sending out another \$5 billion premium rebate is sufficient to maintain its mission, bureau leadership told the Board of Directors at Friday's meeting. Newly minted BWC Administrator John Logue also said the new retail compliance unit of BWC, created by Gov. Mike DeWine to monitor mask use in businesses, is seeing adherence to mask orders in most establishments.

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