

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

9/16/2020 - Senate Judiciary, (First 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

2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means

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

3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance

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

10/1/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (Fourth 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

2/4/2020 - House Civil Justice, (Second 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

6/2/2020 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second 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

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

HB550 MOTORCYCLE SAFETY EDUCATION (HOOPS J)

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

CURRENT STATUS

6/2/2020 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Transportation and Public Safety, (Second 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

5/5/2020 - Referred to Committee House Commerce and Labor

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

8/31/2020 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice

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

6/10/2020 - Consideration of House Amendments; Senate Does Not Concur, Vote on Emergency Clause 10-22

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 *(SCHAFER 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

9/23/2020 - Senate Education, (Third 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

FY22-23 BUDGET

Ohio may not see a full a recovery from the economic toll of the coronavirus pandemic until 2022, according Office of Budget and Management (OBM) Deputy Director for Budget and Planning Dan Baker. Baker appeared on the Center for Community Solutions' (CCS) Friday webinar, which also featured Ohio Poverty Law Center Director Susan Jagers and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Assistant Director Kara Wentz. The three discussed how the pandemic has affected state government and services.

BUSINESS/CORPORATE

Individuals walking around Capitol Square Wednesday afternoon had the opportunity to check out a new prototype of the Lordstown Motors Endurance. Joined by a number of state lawmakers on the west lawn of the Statehouse, Lordstown Motors CEO Steve Burns said the vehicle is set to become the first all-electric pickup truck on the market when the initial finished products roll off the line in September 2021. The company has already received \$2 billion in preorders, Burns said, noting companies with fleets are his target customers.

CENSUS

The U.S. Census Bureau will begin special operations to count people experiencing homelessness across the country beginning next week, Tuesday Sept. 22 and concluding on Thursday, Sept. 24. Specially trained census takers will count people at shelters, soup kitchens and mobile food van stops in an operation called Service-Based Enumeration (SBE). Census takers will also count people who live outdoors, in transit stations, and at other locations where people are known to sleep in an operation called Targeted Non-Sheltered Outdoor Locations (TNSOL).

CHILDREN/FAMILIES

The Children Services Transformation Advisory Council met in four workgroups Monday to continue the work of developing recommendations to improve the foster care system, as they were assigned to do by Gov. Mike DeWine. The workgroups focused on the justice system Monday.

CORONAVIRUS

Health guidance targeted to upcoming Halloween festivities was released on Friday. It stresses the importance of using caution and planning ahead. Among recommended best practices is a series of "safer, socially distant ways to celebrate" including drive-through trick-or-treat events and drive-by costume or car-decorating contests. (A suggestion to leave treats in mailboxes was eliminated in a later draft of the recommendations because the practice is illegal.)

The state's coronavirus website now includes a dashboard displaying case data by race and ethnicity, Gov. Mike DeWine announced during his COVID-19 briefing Tuesday. The information on coronavirus.ohio.gov can be broken down by age/county and compared to the overall Ohio population, the governor said. "Improving data collection and reporting, as well as creating a publicly-available dashboard, were recommendations from the COVID-19 Minority Health Strike Force," DeWine said. "This dashboard will help better track health inequities and disparities, and we believe this data will also help put critical decisions into context for policymakers."

An order from Interim Health Director Lance Himes will lift some of the pandemic restrictions on restaurants, bars, catering facilities and similar venues at 12:01 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 24, though distancing measures, sanitation guidelines and certain occupancy limits remain.

Nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and homes serving those with developmental disabilities may allow residents to have visitors inside the facilities beginning Monday, Oct. 12, Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Aging Director Ursel McElroy said on Thursday. Meanwhile, DeWine said at his Thursday briefing that he would veto SB311 (McColley-Roegner), which would allow the General Assembly to rescind public health orders, saying "the bill cannot become law."

The Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) has begun a \$1 million public awareness campaign on preventing the spread of COVID-19, focused on people who have had the novel coronavirus and survived. The campaign includes television, radio and social media advertisements that started Wednesday and will run through Nov. 24 in markets around the state.

A lawsuit against Interim Health Director Lance Himes regarding requirements for children to wear masks in school settings has been moved from Putnam County to Franklin County at Himes' request, as the plaintiffs' request for reconsideration was denied Thursday. The lawsuit, filed Sept. 9, claims that the health order represents "unconstitutional" conduct by Himes and did not include public hearings, lacked an expiration date and "imposes exemption standards which are contrary to clear constitutional requirements." Similar statements were made about other orders by Himes and past Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Amy Acton.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Springfield was named as the regional SBDC of the Year, according to an Ohio Development Services Agency (DSA) release Monday. It was recognized for an investor pitch competition and its role in responding to the Memorial Day 2019 tornadoes.

EDUCATION

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) owes a combined total of more than \$40 million to the Cleveland, Dayton and Toledo school districts in a dispute over how the agency counted student enrollment more than a decade ago, a Franklin County Common Pleas judge ruled recently. Judge Gina Russo determined a section of the FY10-11 budget bill meant to limit ODE's liability in the dispute could not bar the claims by the three districts.

The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) has announced new regional alignments for the upcoming football playoffs after 664 schools opted in for the postseason. On Tuesday, Sept. 29 and Wednesday, Sept. 30, the head coaches in each region will vote to seed the teams in their region. OHSAA will then place teams on brackets on Thursday, Oct. 1. With various numbers of schools in each region, many of the higher seeds will have a first-round bye.

Members of the State Board of Education's (SBOE) Teaching, Leading and Learning Committee said they were hesitant to rescind a rule that puts in a place a program for adults who have not yet obtained their high school diploma. During the Monday meeting, Director Leah Amstutz and Associate Director Shell Nichols of the Office of Career Technical Education in the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) presented on Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3301-43, regarding adult high school continuation programs.

State Board of Education members Tuesday urged greater effort to hold early childhood education funding harmless when expected budget cuts hit in the coming biennium, and some also advocated that the board reinstate its standing committee on budget and legislative matters. Superintendent Paolo DeMaria and Ohio Department of Education budget chief Aaron Rausch gave a presentation on draft budget scenarios for submission to the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) in order to gather feedback and make changes ahead of the board's vote to approve an official budget request in October.

The State Board of Education rescheduled a training Tuesday on equity, discrimination and implicit bias called for in an anti-racism resolution passed earlier this year, in order to hear from several presenters who wanted to address the board with concerns about that resolution and topics like the Black Lives Matter movement, *the New York Times'* 1619 Project and critical race theory. Citing a hefty

workload for the day and the long list of people who wanted to speak during the board's public participation session, President Laura Kohler proposed to move that session to the end of the agenda. But board member Sarah Fowler Arthur countered that the mid-afternoon professional development training session with Ohio State University's Kirwan Institute instead be shifted to the end of the agenda, saying members of the public should be allowed to participate and that the training was voluntary.

The Ohio Supreme Court labeled as moot and dismissed Thursday a lawsuit from families and private schools who objected to a delay earlier this year in the EdChoice application window amid a dispute over how to address a dramatic expansion in the number of schools at which students would be eligible.

Children who miss a lot of school from kindergarten to eighth grade may suffer unexpected costs as young adults, new research from Ohio State University (OSU) suggests. Researchers found that those who were more regularly absent in these early years of school were less likely to vote, reported having greater economic difficulties and had poorer educational outcomes when they were 22 to 23 years old.

ELECTIONS 2020

Ohio once again is the site of multiple voting lawsuits as a presidential election approaches, with a dispute between the Ohio Democratic Party (ODP) and Secretary of State Frank LaRose on absentee ballot dropboxes in the 10th District Court of Appeals; litigation between the A. Phillip Randolph Institute and LaRose in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, also over dropboxes; ODP and LaRose over electronic submission of absentee applications, also in the 10th District; and the League of Women Voters of Ohio and American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio against LaRose over Ohio's signature matching process for absentee ballots.

Ohio Republican leaders expressed optimism Friday that President Donald Trump will carry the state again in the upcoming general election, with campaign Senior Advisor Bob Paduchik telling State Central and Executive Committee members that their efforts and those of campaign volunteers have taken Ohio "out of play" as a contested state.

American social media companies should take further measures to stop voting-related misinformation on their platforms, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) said Monday. Brown joined 17 colleagues in writing a letter to Facebook, Instagram, Google, YouTube and Twitter, encouraging their executives to take a number of actions to mitigate the negative effects disinformation campaigns can have on the electorate.

As President Donald Trump holds a rally in Toledo on Monday, U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo) led an Ohio Democratic Party press conference to criticize the president, saying he has broken promises to Ohio workers. Trump made two stops in Ohio Monday. The first was a stop at Wright Bros. Aero in Vandalia, and he later held a rally at Grande Aire in Swanton near the Toledo Express Airport.

Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio (PPGOH) is joining a number of nonprofit organizations and corporations in making Election Day -- Tuesday, Nov. 3 -- a paid holiday for all staff members, the health care provider announced Monday. The organization is also taking additional steps to ensure staff, patients and supporters are registered to vote, according to a news release.

Changes to the Ohio Benefits system in August 2019 delayed the requested delivery of voter registration forms to approximately 59,000 individuals, Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Communications Director Bill Teets said Tuesday. During his coronavirus briefing, DeWine announced that DAS mailed voter registration forms to 59,000 people a week ago after discovering a system error that prevented their delivery.

Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee Chairman Bill Coley (R-West Chester) told *Hannah News* that elections reform bill HB680 (Abrams) will wait until lame duck session in order to avoid any confusion for the upcoming election.

Secretary of State Frank LaRose said Wednesday that more than 44,000 Ohioans have signed up to serve as poll workers with 41 days left until the Tuesday, Nov. 3 General Election. That includes 19,466 Democratic poll workers and 17,437 Republicans.

Surveys from Quinnipiac University and Baldwin Wallace University released on Thursday showed a tightened presidential race in the Buckeye State with just under two weeks before Ohioans start casting absentee ballots. Quinnipiac released its first survey of likely voters in Ohio, showing Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden with 48 percent and President Donald Trump, who won the state by 8 percentage points in 2016, with 47 percent, a statistical tie. Baldwin Wallace's Community Research Institute (CRI), in partnership with Oakland University and Ohio Northern University, also showed Biden and Trump in a statistical tie in Ohio.

The following endorsements were made over the week:

- The re-election campaign of U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles) announced the endorsement of the Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) of District Council 6.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The state unemployment rate dropped to 8.9 percent in August, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) said Friday, down from a revised 9.0 percent in July. The 45,500 non-agricultural wage and salary jobs added in the month, however, again trailed June numbers after previously slow gains in July. ODJFS said the number of workers unemployed in Ohio in August was 510,000, unchanged from July. The number of unemployed has increased by 269,000 in the past 12 months from 241,000. The August unemployment rate for Ohio increased from 4.2 percent in August 2019.

Traditional unemployment, trade, SharedWork Ohio and extended-benefit claimants can now begin taking action to receive \$300 Lost

Wages Assistance (LWA) payments made available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced on its website.

For the week ending Sept. 19, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) reported 17,435 initial unemployment claims to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). That number is slightly higher than last week, when ODJFS reported 16,294 new jobless claims.

ENERGY/UTILITIES

Chairman Sam Randazzo of the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) waved off Sierra Club opposition Thursday and personally commended the Ohio State University (OSU) for planning and proposing a combined heat and power (CHP) plant expected to meet 85 percent of the Columbus campus' heating needs and generate more than 105 megawatts (MW) of electricity when completed. The board unanimously approved OSU's \$278 million CHP for construction and operation on 1.18 acres of current west campus greenhouse facilities at John Herrick Drive and Vernon Tharp Street, where natural gas combustion turbines would generate electricity and supply exhaust heat and two steel stacks would rise 115 feet above the ground.

The Office of Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) has joined other advocates for average and low-income Ohioans devastated by the COVID-19 economy in petitioning the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) to order the state's largest utility to conform its income-based policies to the Ohio Development Services Agency's (DSA).

The state utility watchdog says the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) has dropped the ball in ordering FirstEnergy to affirm on its own authority that the company and its affiliates did not divert ratepayer dollars to passage and preservation of nuclear and coal subsidies in HB6 (Callender-Wilkin). The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) has appealed PUCO's Sept. 15 ruling in favor of a full audit and investigation of "'Company A' (generally understood to be FirstEnergy Corp.) and 'Company A-1' (generally understood to be FirstEnergy Solutions)," now successor owner of Ohio's two nuclear plants, Energy Harbor.

The courts should block nuclear operator Energy Harbor from seeing any financial benefit from HB6 (Callender-Wilkin) because of the alleged corruption involved in its passage, Attorney General Dave Yost argues in a civil lawsuit filed Wednesday that also targets former House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford), FirstEnergy and others.

The House Select Committee on Energy Policy and Oversight heard from four more invited witnesses Wednesday, receiving differing views on what should be done about HB6 (Callender-Wilkin). The four were divided into pairs, with representatives of the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) and Industrial Energy Users (IEU)-Ohio listed as testifying on HB746 (Lanese-Greenspan) and leaders of the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA) and Ohio Energy Group speaking to HB738 (Skindell-O'Brien). The testimony was largely focused on addressing replacement of HB6 generally rather than specific aspects of either bill, however.

The 11th District Court of Appeals was wrong to grant summary judgment to the state in a "regulatory takings" case involving the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR) suspension of an injection well found to cause minor earthquakes in Northeast Ohio, the Ohio Supreme Court has ruled. The lower court must consider AWMS Water Solutions LLC's total-takings claim and its partial-takings claims, Justice Patrick Fischer wrote for the majority in *AWMS v. Mertz*, joined by Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, Justice Judith French and Justice Pat DeWine. Justices Sharon Kennedy and Melody Stewart concurred in judgment only, with Kennedy writing a separate opinion. Justice Michael Donnelly wrote a dissenting opinion.

ENVIRONMENT

The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) was joined by its newest board member, Cara Dingus Brook, during the organization's recent meeting. Brook, the president and CEO of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, was appointed to the post by Gov. Mike DeWine in late August.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) provided more details on its partnership with the Lake Erie and Aquatic Research Network (LEARN) in a recent news release. ODNR Director Mary Mertz announced the collaboration to help monitor and evaluate ODNR's H2Ohio wetland projects during Ohio Sea Grant's "Understanding Algal Blooms: State of the Science Virtual Conference."

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) appeared before the Senate Transportation, Commerce, and Workforce Committee on Wednesday to testify on the licenses that are under the agency's purview, saying it agreed with some of the House's recommendations on the elimination of certain licenses, but that others it would like the Senate to remove.

FEDERAL

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) said Tuesday his anticipated support of President Donald Trump's nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court following the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg comes in a "different context" than when he did not support former President Barack Obama's Court nominee Merrick Garland in 2016.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

A bill that would authorize Auditor of State Keith Faber to look at ways to improve the unemployment claims process became an omnibus bill of sorts Tuesday after the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee amended it with a number of provisions, including Senate legislation that appropriates federal CARES Act funds that only just began its hearings in the House. SB357 (Dolan) allocates the remaining \$650 million of CARES Act funds to local communities for pandemic-related expenses. It passed the Senate unanimously earlier this month. Sen. Matt Huffman (R-Lima) moved an amendment to HB614 (Fraizer-Richardson) that adds SB357 to the bill. The Senate approved HB614 on Wednesday, and the House agreed to the amendments.

The state of Ohio moved a step closer to permanently authorizing liquor permit holders to sell and deliver to-go alcoholic beverages after the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee reported out HB669 (Swearingen-LaRe) on Tuesday. The bill is more restrictive than the version that came out of the House, however, as committee members unanimously accepted an amendment making various changes. The Senate passed the bill Wednesday, and the House agreed to the amendments.

Aside from action on the above bills, the House on Wednesday approved Senate amendments to HB66 (Merrin), theft restitution legislation amended to allow removal of former House Speaker Larry House (R-Glenford) from the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee and Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board; Senate amendments on HB242 (Lang-Jones), which would preempt local plastic bag bans; Senate amendments to HB8 (Manchester-Galonski), regarding foster caregiver training; Senate amendments to HB211 (Arndt), regarding abandoned watercraft titles; Senate amendments to HB339 (Merrin), regarding insurance law; and conference reports on HB160 (Ingram), regarding liquor laws, and SB163 (Kunze), a license plate omnibus.

Aside from action on HB614 and HB669, the Senate session Wednesday included approval of SB311 (McColley-Roegner), to constrain the governor's public health quarantine powers; SB360 (Obhof), to prevent the closing of licensed firearm dealers during a public health emergency; SB256 (Manning-Lehner), to bar life sentences without parole for juveniles; SCR16 (Gavarone), which calls for justice for victims of police violence and declares opposition to efforts to defund police departments; SB16 (Williams), regarding citizen-police interactions; SB34 (Kunze), regarding licensure and conduct of school employees; SB80 (Maharath), designating the last week of September as "Diaper Need Awareness Week"; SB201 (Dolan), to create alternate employer organizations; SB328 (Maharath-Kunze), requiring Medicaid to cover doula services; SB351 (Dolan), to designate Aug. 31 as "Ohio Overdose Awareness Day"; and SB361 (Burke), to create the adoption-linked deposit program.

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee offered unanimous support Wednesday to Democratic legislation requiring the State Board of Education to develop high school curriculum on "proper interactions with peace officers" and the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) to provide the Ohio Attorney General's Office corresponding recommendations on "proper interactions with civilians." SB16 (Williams) would go on to near-unanimous passage by the full Senate with additional language requiring the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) to adapt the high school curriculum for mandatory driver instruction.

The Sunset Review Committee was scheduled to meet Wednesday evening in the Statehouse, but the committee's chair, Sen. Kristina D. Roegner (R-Hudson), decided to accept all written testimony from witnesses after Wednesday's Senate session went late, according to her office.

In other legislative action, the Senate Judiciary Committee reported out SB312 (McColley), to make changes to the Hardin County Court of Common Pleas.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Ohio Hospital Association (OHA) and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) will lead statewide implementation of a national quality improvement program organized by The Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM). "Our collaboration with the Ohio Department of Health to join and implement this renowned national program in Ohio will build upon statewide and community efforts to bring stronger maternal health outcomes," OHA president and CEO Mike Abrams said in a release. "

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced recently the withdrawal of a proposed rule that would limit states' options for funding their Medicaid programs and require more disclosure of provider payment data. The federal agency proposed the Medicaid Fiscal Accountability Rule (MFAR) in November, citing growth in program spending and concern that some states were funding their share from "impermissible sources." Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) Director Maureen Corcoran had expressed concern about the potential effects of MFAR previously, saying recently she was hoping the administration would slow its implementation. ODM spokesman Kevin Walter said in an email that the state is "appreciative of CMS's reconsideration of the MFAR rule."

HIGHER EDUCATION

AEIOU Scientific, a medical technology start-up that spun out of technology developed at Ohio University (OU), has won the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Ignite the Night OHIO award for their efforts to commercialize their Cortical Bone Mechanics Technology (CBMT) which can non-invasively assess bone strength. The national program is designed to identify solutions to problems of interest to NASA and connect innovators with potential investors to fund further development and product commercialization, according to a release from OU.

JUDICIAL

The death of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg drew statements of remembrance from Ohio officials, as well as debate over whether the U.S. Senate should proceed with filling her seat given how close the presidential election is, and how Senate Republicans declined to consider former President Barack Obama's election-year nomination in 2016. "Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg used her considerable talents to fight for equal protection under the law for all, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual identity, disability or national origin. America has lost a jurist with a conscience, true consistent convictions, civility, a sense of humor and a love of the law. America has lost a lodestar. I, along with so many who admired and respected RBG, am truly devastated by her passing. Rest in peace," said Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor.

The Ohio Supreme Court has removed Republican Judge Jason Warner from active service on the Marion County Common Pleas Court while an indictment is pending against him for a hit-and-run crash that left a teenager trapped in a car.

Guardians ad litem will double their education hours and begin mandatory review of medical and mental health records not only for the child but potentially for all family members and other relevant parties effective Friday, Jan. 1. Pre-service training will now include "lethality" assessments of family members. Parties' inability to pay the guardian ad litem, however, will not delay court proceedings nor prevent a final determination of parenting time and custody. Amendments to Rule 48 of the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio address the range of requirements on guardians ad litem, whether acting solely in that role or also as the child's trial counsel. In all cases, the guardian's primary focus is the "best interest of the child."

The Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association (OPAA) has clarified for *Hannah News* its position on the constitutionality of the Ohio Supreme Court task force on wrongful conviction and OPAA's continued resolve not to participate in an advisory group spanning multiple branches of government and one prepared to opine on the inner-workings of prosecutors' offices.

Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor took the next step Thursday in the formation of a rechristened Ohio Criminal Justice Commission (OCJC) and a statewide criminal justice database that together would support both the perception and reality of racial fairness among courts, prosecutors, law enforcement and corrections.

LIQUOR/ALCOHOL

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's (OSHP) Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) announced it had cited nine liquor permit holders for violating health orders over the weekend, saying the inspections were in response to complaints to the agency. Those cited included a Columbus establishment, Avalon, where agents allegedly saw "more than 100 patrons congregating in large groups throughout the premises with no social distancing measures in place."

MARIJUANA/HEMP

A new report from the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law Drug Enforcement and Policy Center (DEPC) found many Ohioans are still dissatisfied with the Ohio Medical Marijuana Control Program (MMCP), primarily due to pricing. The report builds on a previous survey conducted in 2019 by DEPC and Harm Reduction Ohio.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Promotion of the Dayton region as a location for the new U.S. Space Command headquarters continued, with Gov. Mike DeWine sending a letter to President Donald Trump Thursday. Trump is scheduled to be in the Dayton region Monday for a campaign event at the Vandalia airport. "Our nation would benefit greatly by the synergies of a co-location of U.S. Space Command Headquarters with the Air Force Research Laboratory, the National Air and Space Intelligence Center, the Air Force Institute of Technology and the Air Force Materiel Command," DeWine wrote.

The Ohio National Guard (ONG) announced late Thursday that it would be continuing its support of foodbanks into December, following a previous extension of federal funding for guard efforts through the year's end. Approximately 350 ONG personnel are assisting 14 foodbanks and warehouses around Ohio, according to a release from the Adjutant General's Department. Due to civilian and military obligations, some ONG units are transitioning out of that role and being replaced with others.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) recently released a revised version of its public policy platform, updating the one issued in February to account for effects of the pandemic and economic downturn. The year has been "a period of unprecedented challenges for Ohio and the nation," GOPC said in a release, but that presents opportunities for reform and growth. The three "priority areas" of the initial version -- investing in brownfields, innovating infrastructure and transportation and empowering Ohio's legacy cities -- are retained, but the release noted the pandemic has highlighted the importance of the infrastructure and transportation improvements.

PEOPLE

Funeral services were held last week for former Rep. Bruce Goodwin (R-Defiance) following his death due to complications of multiple myeloma. Goodwin worked as a teacher, coach and school administrator before entering public office, where he represented the 74th District from 2007 to 2012.

POLLS/STUDIES

A recent national survey of 2,000 people commissioned by the Ohio State University (OSU) Wexner Medical Center finds more Americans are adjusting how they use social media platforms amid increased national tension. Researchers said many participants cited stress from the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the movement to end racial inequality and other divisive political issues in the country as reasons for taking a social media break.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The newest course in the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) overhaul is "Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Lethal Use of Force and Officer-Involved Shooting Investigations." It's a part of Attorney General Dave Yost's OPOTA "redesign," with in-demand topics presented in-person when warranted and virtually in all other cases, including BCI review of local use-of-force incidents.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Thursday's meeting of the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) saw commission Executive Director Cheryl Lyman reporting that state construction projects are ongoing despite the COVID-19 pandemic and workforce challenges. Lyman said 83

projects are in the design phase, while another 213 projects are in the construction phase as of August 2020, altogether valued at over \$3 billion.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission Monday was briefed on two new technological projects that commission staff are exploring, including the possible installation of solar technologies on turnpike-owned property. According to a report presented by Brian Kelley, the commission's chief technology officer, the agency will be sending out a request for information to look at the possible installation of solar technologies. Commission staff has identified 255 acres along the turnpike where solar fields could potentially be established, including at existing turnpike facilities such as toll plazas, maintenance buildings and service plazas.

WORKFORCE

Close connections between education and business leaders will be a critical aspect of successful post-pandemic recovery, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted said in a livestreamed discussion Tuesday, and he is confident Ohio is well-prepared for when that day comes. He was one of several speakers in the event organized by the advocacy group Ohio Excels and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation (OWT), which Husted leads. Ohio Business Roundtable President and CEO Pat Tiberi appeared as well to ask Husted questions during their portion of the event.

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