

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

July 21, 2017

Around the Square

Veto Possible in August

Senate President Larry Obhof has scheduled two if-needed session dates in August where the chamber will potentially discuss the veto overrides passed by the House earlier this month. In an interview, Obhof commented the Republican caucus hasn't discussed the agenda in depth, so it's possible some or all may be postponed until the legislature returns in the fall. Both chambers have until December 2018 to overturn any of the Governor's vetoes.

PUCO PowerForward Phase II

The Public Utilities Commission has finalized their plans for the upcoming Phase II of their PowerForward initiative, which is expected to begin July 25th. Phase II will begin with a three day series of panels focused on the technology required to see through plans regarding Ohio's energy future made during Phase I. While Phase I focused on the electrical distribution system, Phase II will focus on technology, regulatory and technical innovation.

Straight A Fund Projects Move Forward

Projects funded by the Straight A Fund are expected to continue despite the fund itself being eliminated from the state budget. The bill details that awardees are permitted to receive FY 2018 funds given prior to the program elimination, but will not receive any additional funding. Straight A Fund Executive Director Susan Zelman commented ODE will continue to help implement programs as best they can, and she is hopeful the program could resurge in the future in some shape or form.

Political News and Notes

U.S. Rep Regula Dies

Former U.S. Representative Ralph Regula has passed away at the age of 92. Regula served 36 years on Capitol Hill before retiring in 2008, making him the longest continuous serving congressman in Ohio's history. From Stark County, Regula played a key role in creating the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Ohio & Erie Canalway and in starting the Northeastern Ohio Medical University and Stark State College.

EPA Sued

The Environmental Law and Policy Center and Advocates for a Clean Lake Erie groups are again suing the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Agency over the status of Lake Erie. The groups are accusing the EPA for failing to label the lake as impaired, even though there has been toxic algal bloom activity in the past few years. The EPA in turn has filed it's own lawsuit against the city of Cleveland Heights, accusing them of allowing sewage into the lake's tributaries. Both suits were filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio.

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