

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

March 9, 2018

Around the Square

Capital Budget Passed House

The capital budget bill passed the House on Wednesday with only two members voting against the measure. The \$2.63 billion bill allocates \$222 million for health and human services, developmental disabilities, mental health, addiction treatment and women's health initiative facilities over the next two fiscal years. It also includes \$150 million in community projects, \$600 million for school facilities, \$514 million for local infrastructure projects and \$483 million for public colleges and universities. The bill now heads to the Senate for approval.

State Launches Next Step in Opioid Challenge

The Third Frontier Commission announced the latest step in the state's Opioid Technology Challenge, which aims at advancing technical solutions to problems related to the opiate crisis. The Challenge phase will offer up to \$200,000 to 12 prize recipients for solutions to diagnosing people at high risk of addiction or overdose, preventing addiction, connecting people to services and protecting first responders and medical professionals. Responses are able to be submitted here <http://bit.ly/2grSaBD> until July 11 with recipients being announced in September.

State of the State Address

Governor John Kasich delivered his final state of the state address on Tuesday at Otterbein University. Straying from previous speeches, Kasich focused on philosophical questions and his influences over the years. Kasich did unveil, however, two initiatives for the state. The first is the Jesse Owens State Park and Wildlife Area, a new state park and wildlife area in Morgan and Muskingum counties, and funding in the capital budget for a new behavioral health facility on the Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare campus in Columbus.

Political News and Notes

Opioid Prescriptions Fall for 5th Year

The State Board of Pharmacy released data stating doctors in Ohio prescribed fewer opioids in 2017 than previous years. This marks the fifth year in a row doctors reported less opiate prescriptions to the state's Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System. The total of doses prescribed to Ohio patients in 2017 was 568 million, down from 631 million in 2016 and 28.4% from an all-time high of 793 million in 2012.

Casinos, Racinos See Revenue Uptick in February

The state's casinos and racinos saw a profit surge last month, according to data from the Ohio Casino Control Commission. Ohio's four casinos brought in a total of \$67.6 million and racinos had \$79.5 million in revenue from video lottery terminals, despite one being closed for over a week due to flooding.

We encourage you to follow BMA (@ByersMinton) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for continued updates throughout the week.