

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse
August 10, 2018

Political News and Notes

Special Election News

On Tuesday, voters took to the polls to elect Ohio's 12th Congressional District Representative to the United States Congress. The heated election was closely watched by people all over the country and continues to draw attention as the final votes are tallied. As the results currently stand, Republican State Senator Troy Balderson beat Democrat Danny O'Connor by 0.8 percentage points or just over 1,500 votes. There are over 3,000 provisional ballots and over 5,000 absentee ballots that still need to be counted by August 24th in order for the result to be finalized. If the final results show a difference of less than 0.5 percent, officials will automatically recount all votes.

Report Details Ohio Cancer Prevention Efforts

A report released by the American Cancer Society Action Network demonstrated that Ohio lags behind in efforts to prevent and reduce the prevalence of cancer. The publication pointed specifically to areas where Ohio legislative efforts have helped cancer prevention, such as Medicaid expansion and smoke-free laws. The American Cancer Society Action Network outlined areas that the state must improve as well, such as tobacco prevention funding and early detection services for certain types of cancer. The report also supported a current bill in the Ohio House aimed at palliative care and further prevention education efforts.

State Outlines Marijuana Licensing Process

Of the 104 applications for medical marijuana processor licenses in Ohio, only 13 met the standards outlined by the state. Officials at the Department of Commerce have stated that the high rate of failure is likely due to how the state application process was designed rather than specific problems with the applicants themselves. The Medical Marijuana Advisory Committee has already given licenses to some of the applicants that met all minimum state criteria, and plans to allow those that failed to meet the standards to apply again through a corrected application.

Ohio Supreme Court Rules on ECOT Decision

On Wednesday, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled against the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) and backed the state school board's decision to require e-schools to show student participation to justify funding. The 4-2 vote solidifies the \$80 million that ECOT must repay to the state and clarified state laws surrounding Ohio Department of Education standards. Justices Terrence O'Donnell and Sharon Kennedy dissented, pointing to a portion of state law concerning the maximum amount of time a student can participate in order for an e-school to receive credit. ECOT has stated that it plans to pursue administrative challenges against the Department of Education going forward.

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