

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse
October 19, 2018

Election Update

Poll Finds Split Governance

According to a poll released on Wednesday by the University of Akron's Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics, Ohio voters are split evenly over which party should control state government. Despite some predicting a "blue wave" and the past eight years of Republican control in all statewide offices, the poll showed 47 percent of respondents favoring Republicans and 45 percent favoring Democrats. Ohio voters stated that they believe Ohio is on the right track but the nation as a whole is not, which could be a large factor in how the election will turn out. The governance split was further demonstrated by Mike DeWine again polling just one percent ahead of opponent Rich Cordray, while Sherrod Brown retains his lead of almost 15 percentage points above Jim Renacci.

Fundraising Update

As Senator Sherrod Brown pulls ahead in the polls, he has also continued to out-raise opponent Representative Jim Renacci. In the 3rd financial quarter this year, Brown raised \$3.15 million compared to Renacci's \$870,423. He also reported more cash on hand, with \$8.1 million to Renacci's \$4.36 million. In other federal races, specifically Ohio's Congressional Districts, Democratic challengers raised significant amounts of money yet fell short to Republican incumbent's war chests. New Democrat challengers including Danny O'Connor, Kenny Harbaugh and Aftab Pureval have more contributions than their incumbent Republican opponents, but are still legging in cash on hand funds.

Political News and Notes

Board of Education Approves Budget

On Tuesday, the State Board of Education voted 13-4 to approve the Department of Education's 2020-21 biennial budget request. The Board accepted two proposed budget plans including a 90% plan that would increase general revenue funds from under \$1 million to \$4.7 million, and a flat-funded approach that would increase funds to \$5.7 million. Members of the board stated that the budget aligns with several of the Department of Education's priorities for potential additional funding, including over \$60 million designated towards early childhood education. A select committee of the Board also backed new graduation requirements and is expected to vote on the plan next month.

Proposed Electric Vehicle Study

Representative Kent Smith proposed a measure to create the Ohio Electric Vehicles Infrastructure Study Commission on Wednesday. The commission would be comprised of members of the House and Senate, as well as stakeholders from groups such as Clean Fuels Ohio, MORPC, AEP PUCO and Ohio EPA. The commission would be tasked with examining legislative efforts regarding electric vehicles and smart compatible infrastructure. The Representative is hoping to have recommendations made by the study commission released in late May, with the possibility of inclusion in the biennial transportation budget.

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