

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse
November 30, 2018

Political News and Notes

Senate District Upset

After vote tallies from Ohio's 3rd Senate District were finalized on Tuesday, Democrat Tina Maharath pulled off a surprising victory over Republican State Representative Anne Gonzales. Maharath did not actively campaign for the Senate seat and was not backed by the Ohio Democratic Party. The election in November was close enough to trigger a vote recount, which ended with Maharath winning 66,438 votes to Gonzales' 64,733. The Senate will still be comprised of 24 Republicans and 9 Democrats, as the 33rd District flipped Republican to balance the 3rd District Democratic win.

Ohio Support Split on House Speaker

The new Democratic majority in the U.S. House of Representatives picked Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi as their Speaker nomination on Wednesday. She was backed by 203 of the Democrats and only opposed by 32. She needs 218 votes to be elected Speaker in January, and no Republicans are expected to support her. Ohio Representatives Joyce Beatty and Marcy Kaptur supported Pelosi, while Tim Ryan voted against her nomination. Representative Marcia Fudge entertained the idea of running but backed down after making a deal with Pelosi that guaranteed her leadership on a House subcommittee.

Around the Square

Counties Approved for Voting Machines

Several county election boards were notified yesterday that they could begin the process of replacing 15 year old voting machines with new equipment appropriated by funds earlier this year. Almost \$114.5 million has been allotted to update the state's voting machines, which are expected to be in place by the next general election. The Secretary of State's office awarded the first few voting machine contracts to several companies who will be working with Boards of Elections to institute the new machines in the coming weeks.

Auxiliary Container Legislation

A piece of legislation preempting local government policies intended to place fees or taxes on temporary packaging (i.e. plastic grocery bags) passed the House on Wednesday along party lines. The measure intends to reduce regulation and create uniformity for businesses regarding containers and transportation bags, while balancing environmental concerns. The House also passed bills involving sentencing reform, state data and occupational licenses.

Ohio Constitution Displayed

On Wednesday, the Ohio Statehouse became the only capitol in the nation to display its founding document. Ohio's Constitutions of 1803 and 1851 are now located in the Ohio Statehouse Museum Education Center in a new visitor display area. The display was made possible by state funding and donations via the Capitol Square Foundation. Current Governor John Kasich and former Governors Bob Taft and Richard Celeste were among the officials who hosted the display's unveiling.

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