

# Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

March 15, 2019

## Around the Square

### State Operating Budget

Today Governor Mike DeWine released his first biennial budget proposal for Fiscal Years 2020 - 2021, focusing spending on children's programs, recovery, workforce development, and natural resources. The budget does not establish new taxes or raise them, and the proposed spending includes \$70 billion in General Revenue Funds (GRF) and \$150.4 billion in all funds appropriations. This is an increase from Fiscal Years 18-19, which included \$65.5 billion in GRF and \$132.8 billion all funds appropriations. Kimberly Murnieks, Director of the Office of Budget Management, said the budget is based on projected slow and steady economic growth in Ohio. Furthermore, the budget does not take or add any funds to the budget stabilization fund. In the budget announcement, Lt. Governor Husted highlighted a significant increase in funding to the Ohio College Opportunity Grant, noting that employers in Ohio are struggling to find qualified candidates for jobs. A link to the budget can be found below:

[https://obm.ohio.gov/Budget/operating/doc/fy-20-21/BlueBook\\_BookOne\\_BudgetRecommendations\\_FY20-21.pdf](https://obm.ohio.gov/Budget/operating/doc/fy-20-21/BlueBook_BookOne_BudgetRecommendations_FY20-21.pdf)

## Political News and Notes

### Water Quality Budget

In his State of the State address last week, Governor DeWine announced the H2Ohio fund, which will focus on water quality in Ohio. This Thursday, at an Impact Ohio conference in Toledo, he outlined his budget plan for the fund, which will support land-based management and water-based restoration programs. In addition, it will promote science and research efforts. DeWine is requesting \$900 million over the next decade in the state's biennial budget. A specialized account would be created in the state's budget to deposit funds intended for water quality issues, which he feels is a more fiscally responsible approach than solving water quality issues through a bond proposal.

### Transportation Budget

This Wednesday, in a Beacon Journal editorial board, Governor DeWine remained steadfast that an 18-cents-a-gallon increase in the gasoline tax is necessary for Ohio to maintain current roads and finish new construction, despite the Ohio House passing a transportation budget last week that increased the gas tax by only 10.7 cents. DeWine called his proposal a "minimalist approach" to making critical infrastructure improvements, and warned that a lower hike in the gas tax could stall projects. Still, President Obhof has indicated that the Senate might cut the gas tax increase to even lower than 10.7 cents-per-gallon. The Senate is expected to introduce a substitute transportation bill Monday and vote on it next week.

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