

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

May 17, 2019

Around the Square

House Priority Legislation

A few bipartisan bills were released this week as part of the Ohio House's long-awaited priority legislation package. Following the chamber's passage of the operating budget last week, several bills were unveiled to address top issues including water quality, job training, foster care, domestic violence prevention, infant mortality, broadband access and drug policy. Speaker Larry Householder and Minority Leader Emilia Sykes spoke to the bipartisan nature of the legislation, and stated that the remaining priority bills would be released next week.

Political News and Notes

Alternative Plans for Graduation Requirements

Following the State Board of Education's recommendations for revising the state high school graduation requirements, a group of business and education organizations unveiled an alternative plan before the legislature. The business-backed proposal would require students to complete a minimum number of required courses, post a score indicating competency in English and math, and earn two diploma seals. The two alternative pathways to graduation differ in their reliance on standardized testing, equitable evaluation of culminating projects, and career technical options for graduates.

Sports Betting

On Thursday, Representatives Dave Greenspan and Brigid Kelly introduced legislation to legalize sports wagering in Ohio. House Bill 194 would permit wagering on professional, amateur and collegiate sports in casinos and racinos. The bill sponsors stated that, while they are currently working off of the 10th draft of the bill, further changes and a possible substitute version are expected as they weigh advice from the 10 other states that have already enacted sports gaming laws. The Senate is also working on their version of the sports betting legislation, Senate Bill 111, which will likely receive hearings soon.

Energy Bill Debate Continues

Controversial energy legislation sparked partisan debate and committee frustrations as hearings on House Bill 6 continued this week. A substitute version of the bill was passed along a party-line vote in the House Energy and Natural Resources committee, prompting several minority caucus members to voice their frustration with the lack of communication from the committee. The latest updates to the bill include expanding the the eligibility for the reduced-emissions credit program to include a facility that emits non-carbon pollutants, requiring the PUCO to establish rate structures per-account with specific averages, expanding the small wind farm definition, and addressing decoupling mechanism costs and revenue.

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