

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

May 3, 2019

Around the Square

Executive Appointment

On Wednesday, Representative Glenn Holmes, a Trumbull County Democrat, resigned from the legislature after being appointed by Governor Mike DeWine to serve on the Ohio Parole Board. His appointment is part of a broader overhaul of the parole board, as DeWine hopes to have members with a diverse professional background. Lisa Hoying, an assistant prosecuting attorney in Clark County, and Steven Herron, an assistant state public defender for the Ohio Public Defender Commission, were also appointed to the board for six-year terms.

Senate Appointment

On Thursday, Senate Republicans selected Representative Tim Schaffer, a Zanesville Republican, to fill the vacant 20th Senate District seat. The seat was previously held by Brian Hill, who resigned from the legislature earlier this year to serve as the CEO to the Guernsey-Muskingum Electric Cooperative. House Republicans are now tasked with filling the vacant 77th House District.

Political News and Notes

State Budget

On Thursday, the House unveiled the latest version of the state budget. One of the biggest proposals is a tax cut for lower-income earners. Those earning less than \$22,500 a year would pay nothing in state income taxes and those earning between \$22,500 and \$88,800 would see their tax rate cut by 4.7%. This will be paid for by lowering a business income deduction, eliminating the tax credit for the motion picture industry, and requiring ride-sharing companies to collect and remit sales tax. Other key proposals in the latest version of the budget include requiring public universities to guarantee student tuition rates for four years, raising the age to buy tobacco products to 21, and adding an additional \$125 million in school-funding on top of DeWine's own education budget increases.

Energy Bill

On Thursday, the House Energy Generation subcommittee voted to report a revised version of House Bill 6 to the full Energy and Natural Resources committee. One of the major changes to the legislation, aimed at bailing out two nuclear plants, is to phase in a fee for residential and commercial customers on their electric bills. The changes would raise residential fees by 50 cents a month in 2020 and rise to \$2.50 a month in 2021, and raise commercial fees by \$15 a month in 2020 and \$20 a month in 2021. The revised bill would phase out surcharges that customers pay for renewable energy, peak demand, and efficiency.

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