

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

July 19, 2019

Around the Square

State Budget

On Thursday morning, Governor DeWine signed the state's biennial operating budget into law, after vetoing twenty five items. Among his major vetoes was removing a plan to eliminate Ohio's current Medicaid pharmacy benefit managers to instate one PBM for the state. Furthermore, he eliminated a provision that guaranteed school districts would not receive less state aid than they are currently granted, which could impact three dozen Ohio districts, like New Albany and Dublin. Included in the budget is a personal income tax cut for Ohioans, \$550 million for educational wraparound services such as mental health counseling, and it raises the age in Ohio for buying tobacco products to 21 while adding a tax on vaping products. Additionally, the budget creates a one year moratorium in which the State of Ohio will not be able to place poorly-performing districts under an academic distress commission. Additionally, the budget allocates \$172 million over two years for the new H2Ohio fund for water quality initiatives, and gives a slight increase in local government and public library funding.

Political News and Notes

Bureau of Workers' Compensation Budget

On Wednesday the House and Senate voted unanimously to pass the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation budget bill, after it also missed the June 30 deadline. Most notably, there is controversy that the budget will not include coverage for first responders' to seek treatment for post traumatic stress disorder. While the provision failed to pass within the BWC budget, lawmakers that opposed it have vowed to handle the issue in a standalone bill, but feel that the budget version was not the correct solution to what all parties seem to recognize as a problem.

Energy Bill

On Wednesday House Bill 6 passed out of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities committee and then out of the full Senate. When it went back to the House for a final vote after it was amended in the Senate, there were not enough yes votes present to pass the legislation. Representative Arndt, a supporter of the bill, retired and three other representatives that previously voted yes were absent. As they were unable to get the 50 votes needed to pass the bill, Speaker Householder has instead scheduled a vote for August 1. If the bill does pass, starting in 2021 - 2027, every Ohio electricity customer will pay a monthly surcharge ranging from 85 cents for residential customers to \$2,400 for large industrial plants. In the final version of the legislation energy-efficient standard for each utility ends once it achieves a 17.5% power reduction, which most companies are already nearing, and it reduces the renewable energy goal from 12.5% by 2027 to 8.5 percent by 2026. Under current law, utilities must reach 8.5 percent renewables by 2022.

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

Bills Introduced This Week

HB 311 - County Investigations: To authorize counties to request and obtain a county inspector general to investigate wrongful acts or omissions in county and other political subdivision government.

HB 312 - Crowdfunding: To permit intrastate equity crowdfunding under certain circumstances.

SB 177 - Roofing Regulation: To regulate and require the registration of roofing contractors.

SCR 4 - Buster Douglas Day: To designate February 11, 2020, as James Buster Douglas 42:1 Odds Day.

SB 178 - Flu Shots: Regarding the authority of podiatrists to administer influenza vaccinations.

SR 237 - World Refugee Day: Honoring June 20, 2019 as World Refugee Day.

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