

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse
September 20, 2019

Around the Square

Antitrust Hearings

This week Ohio Attorney General Yost, Senate President Obhof, and Senate Judiciary Chairman John Eklund announced that the Senate Judiciary committee would be holding meetings across the state to hear testimony on the impact of Facebook and Google on Ohioans. Two hearings will be held in October, one at Cleveland State University and the other will take place at University of Cincinnati. The feedback they receive is meant to assist lawmakers who are reviewing Ohio's antitrust laws to see if any changes need to be made. Attorney General Yost has joined other states in recent antitrust investigations involving the two major corporations. The United States Congress, Justice Department, and Federal Trade Commission have also launched similar investigations.

Political News and Notes

Ohio Unemployment Rate

On Friday, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services announced that Ohio's unemployment rate rose from 4 percent in July to 4.1 percent in August. This increase is 3,000 jobs, which gives Ohio 238,000 total unemployed individuals. However, the unemployment rate in Ohio in August 2018 was 4.6 percent, so this is still an improvement from a year ago.

Vaping Ban

Governor Mike DeWine has asked lawyers in his administration to examine whether or not he has the authority to ban flavored e-cigarettes. His interest in doing so comes as the result of many vaping related deaths and illnesses in the United States and Ohio. Seventeen people in Ohio have been hospitalized for vaping-related illnesses, with patients ranging in age from 16 to 59. There have been no deaths in Ohio. While the exact cause of these illnesses are not known, the CDC has said that most of these patients have a history of using e-cigarettes containing THC, which is the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana. The president of Ohio's vaping industry trade group said that if DeWine bans flavored e-cigarettes the states approximately 650 vaping stores would immediately go out of business.

Gun Reform

This week the Ohio Senate held its first hearings on several proposals that were introduced to curb gun violence and related deaths. A bill to raise the minimum age to purchase a firearm and increase the penalty for giving firearms to a minor received its first hearing. Additionally, a bill to require universal background checks for all purchases and a bill to temporarily confiscate the firearms of those considered to be an immediate danger to themselves or others, frequently known as a red flag law, received a first hearing in Senate Government Oversight and Reform.

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

This Week's Bills

HB 334 - Road Naming: To designate a portion of State Route 39 in Holmes County as the "Cpl. Fredrick Wayne Miller Memorial Highway."

HB 335 - Domestic Violence: To require a person who is subject to a civil or criminal domestic violence temporary protection order to surrender the person's firearms.

HB 336 - Education Committee: To reinstate the Joint Education Oversight Committee, make an appropriation, and declare an emergency.

HB 337 - Testimonial Privilege: To provide generally a privilege for communications between a qualified advocate rendering advocacy services and a victim of certain crimes, to exempt the nondisclosure of that privileged communication from the offense of failure to report a crime, and to generally require a qualified advocate to report child abuse or neglect of the victim.

HB 338 - Mental Health: To enact the Mental Health Awareness and Community Violence Protection Act.

HB 339 - Insurance Laws: To enact the "Insurance Code Correction Act" to make technical and corrective changes to the laws governing insurance.

HB 340 - Drainage Laws: To revise the state's drainage laws.

SB 196 - Testimonial Privilege: To provide generally a testimonial privilege for communications between a qualified advocate rendering advocacy services and a victim of domestic violence, human trafficking, menacing by stalking, or sexual violence, to exempt the nondisclosure of that privileged communication from the offense of failure to report a crime, to require a qualified advocate to report knowledge or reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect of the victim except for privileged communications, and to specify circumstances in which the victim is considered to have waived the privilege.

SB 197 - Road Naming: To designate a portion of State Route 39 in Holmes County as the "Cpl. Fredrick Wayne Miller Memorial Highway."

SB 198 - Network Care: Regarding out-of-network care.

SB 199 - Scholarship Granting Organizations: To formally state the General Assembly's intention to create a process for certifying eligible scholarship-granting organizations.

SB 200 - Dyslexia: With regard to professional development for screening and intervention for children with dyslexia.

SB 201 - Employer Organizations: To create alternate employer organizations.

SB 202 - Local Authority: To restore local authority to generally regulate firearms-related conduct.

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