

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

January 17, 2020

Around the Square

133rd General Assembly Update

Attached to the e-mail for This Week at the Statehouse is a Politics and Priorities Legislative Update for the 133rd General Assembly. This document gives an overview of 2019 in Ohio politics, as well as the top priorities moving into the second half of the General Assembly this year. Additionally, there is an overview of primaries to watch for this coming March. If you have any questions or would like more information please do not hesitate to reach out to our team.

Senate Committee Broadcast

As of this week, all Ohio General Assembly committees will be streamed online for the first time ever. The Ohio House began broadcasting all committees in early 2019, and the Ohio Senate joined this week. The effort to have all committees readily streamed to the public in real time has been years in the making through a push from good-government groups and lawmakers. Ohio Senate committees were not previously broadcast due to an Ohio Channel staff shortage to operate broadcasts despite having cameras in all committee rooms. Meanwhile, the Ohio House had to spend \$414,000 to install cameras in all committee rooms in 2019. Access to all Ohio Senate and Ohio House committees and legislative sessions can be viewed live or watched later at OhioChannel.org.

Political News and Notes

Distracted Driving

Earlier this week, Representative Mary Lightbody introduced legislation to make cell phone use while driving a primary offense. This means that officers will be able to pull someone over if they see a driver using a cell phone, whereas under current law an officer must have another reason to pull a driver over other than cell phone use. The only exception to current law is that officers can pull over someone under the age of eighteen for using a phone as a primary offense. Governor DeWine has previously called for the introduction and passage of such legislation, stating that cell phone use while driving can be just as dangerous as drunk driving.

Medical Marijuana

This week marks one year since Ohio began the legal sale of medical marijuana, with four dispensaries opening on January 16, 2019. Since then, numerous dispensaries have opened, with 48 currently operating, and sales have been strong. In 2019, medical marijuana products saw \$60.6 million worth of sales in the state. Ohio's programs are still experiencing growing pains, such as a lack of access to dispensaries in regions of the state, as well as high prices. Although the average cost has decreased, Ohio patients are paying an average of \$330 per ounce.

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

This Week's Bills

HB 465 - Preschool Zones: To authorize the creation of school zones around specified preschools

HB 466 - Voter Registration: To create an automated voter registration system.

HB 467 - Withholding Rate: To reduce the pass-through entity withholding tax rate to four per cent.

HB 468 - Distracted Driving: To alter the law governing the use of a handheld electronic wireless communications device while driving.

HB 469 - Health Insurance: To prohibit certain health insurance cost-sharing practices.

HB 470 - Abuse Prosecution: To eliminate the period of limitations for the criminal prosecution of a person for rape and to extend the period of imitations for a civil action by a victim of childhood sexual abuse.

HB 471 - Childhood Abuse: To extend the period of limitations for a civil action by a victim of childhood sexual abuse.

HB 472 - Statute of Limitations: To eliminate the period of limitations for the criminal prosecution of a person for rape.

HB 473 - State Motto: To allow the state motto to be used alongside the state seal.

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