

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

March 27, 2020

Around the Square

State of the State Delayed

Gov. Mike DeWine and the Ohio's top legislators announced a decision to delay the State of the State Address scheduled for March 31st. To avoid bringing the entire General Assembly together, and to practice safe social distancing, the address will not be held until after the State of Emergency has concluded.

COVID-19 Statistics

The most recent numbers from the Ohio Department of Health reveal that Ohio has 867 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19, requiring 91 ICU admissions and claiming 15 fatalities. Nationally, the Centers for Disease Control documents 68,500 confirmed cases and nearly 1,000 deaths, making the United States the global leader in confirmed COVID-19 cases. However, these officials stress that these reports represent a mere fraction of the true number of cases around the state and country due to variability in symptom presentation and limited testing capacity. As the Governor expects the number of required hospital beds to be double the state's current capacity, he encourages anyone able to donate PPE to reach out to his office by [email](#). For all COVID-19 updates, follow Gov. DeWine's briefing daily at 2 pm [here](#) or keep an eye out for our daily updates via e-mail. Additionally, many resources can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Political News and Notes

Unemployment Report

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services received 188,000 unemployment claims last week alone, contributing to 3.28 million claims nationally. The previous national high was a mere 696,000. The Governor assured Ohioans that benefits can be retroactive and alleviated concerns about the solvency of the state's fund. Individuals should apply using the [website](#) at off-peak times.

State Relief Package

The General Assembly passed an omnibus effort on Wednesday to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, which Governor DeWine is expected to sign Friday. The deadline to vote in the March 17th primary, through mail only, has been extended to April 28th. Deadlines to file state income tax have also been extended to July 15th. Additional provisions include prohibiting water service disconnections, leeway for professional license renewal requirements, postponing evictions, and a number of K-12 education items. Mandated testing and the report card accountability system have been waived for the 2019-20 school year in addition to a temporary freeze placed on the number of schools eligible for performance-based vouchers.

Federally, The U.S. Senate passed the CARES Act, a \$2 trillion stimulus package to fund increasing healthcare needs, business loans, and direct payments. Individuals earning less than \$75,000 (\$150,000 for married couples) will receive a \$1,200 check, with an additional \$500 bonus for each child aged 16 and under.

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

This Week's Bills

HB 560 - Elections: To modify the law governing voter registration and the method of conducting elections.

HB 561 - Physician Assistant : To suspend the requirement that a physician assistant practice with supervision and to declare an emergency.

HB 562 - Evictions: To prohibit foreclosure activity and the eviction of residential and commercial tenants during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19, to refer such proceedings caused by the state of emergency to mediation, and to declare an emergency.

HB 563 - EMS Notifications: To require prompt notification of an emergency medical services worker who has treated or transported a patient who is presumptively positive for a contagious or infectious disease and to declare an emergency.

HB 564 - Utilities Disruption: To prevent the disruption of utility service during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.

HB 565 - Tax Deadlines: To extend the filing and payment dates for state, municipal, and school district income taxes by the same period as any federal income tax extension granted in response to the COVID-19 disease outbreak and to declare an emergency.

HB 566 - LGF Distributions: To increase the percentage of revenue to the General Revenue Fund distributed to the Local Government Fund and to declare an emergency.

HB 567 - Tax Credit: To temporarily authorize a partially refundable earned income tax credit and to declare an emergency.

HB 568 - Medicaid Coverage: To require insurance and Medicaid coverage of a ninety-day supply of certain covered drugs and to declare an emergency.

HB 569 - Childcare: To extend the date by which publicly funded child care providers must be rated through the Step Up to Quality Program and to declare an emergency.

HB 570 - County Purchases: To allow a county to purchase public health-related items and communication equipment without competitive bidding, solicit bids electronically, and open bids during a meeting held electronically during the period of the emergency declared by Executive Order 2020-01D, issued on March 9, 2020, and to declare an emergency.

HB 571 - Occupational Diseases: To make COVID-19 contracted by a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical worker an occupational disease under the Workers' Compensation Law under certain circumstances and to declare an emergency.

HB 572 - Fee Waivers: To allow the Ohio Public Works Commission, the Ohio Water Development Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, county auditors, and county recorders, during the state of emergency due to COVID-19, to waive certain penalties and late fees, suspend certain reporting requirements, and waive electronic recording fees, and to declare an emergency.

HB 573 - Occupational Diseases: To make COVID-19 an occupational disease under the Workers' Compensation Law under certain circumstances and to declare an emergency.

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HB 574 - Unemployment Compensation: To transfer moneys to the Unemployment Compensation Special Administration Fund, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

HB 575 - County Payments: To permit counties to receive payments by a drop box instead of in-person for the duration of the Governor's COVID-19 emergency declaration and to declare an emergency.

HB 576 - Tax Penalties: To temporarily abate the charging of interest and penalties against tax-delinquent homesteads and suspend tax foreclosure proceedings and tax certificate sales regarding such homesteads and to declare an emergency.

HB 577 - Academic Commissions: To dissolve existing academic distress commissions, to place a moratorium on the creation of academic distress commissions, to establish the School Transformation Board, and to declare an emergency.

HB 578 - Homeless Shelters: To make an appropriation to support homeless shelters in the state and to provide emergency rental assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to declare an emergency.

HB 579 - COVID-19 Testing: To require health insurers to cover COVID-19 testing and treatment, to prohibit balance billing, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

HB 580 - Telemedicine: To require health plan issuers to cover telemedicine services during a state of emergency, and to declare an emergency.

HB 581 - COVID-19 Response: To address immediate concerns related to COVID-19.

HB 582 - State Spending: To make appropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, and capital reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2022.

HB 583 - Medicaid Requirements: To waive certain Medicaid requirements during the COVID-19 emergency declaration and to declare an emergency.

HB 584 - Unemployment Compensation: To temporarily change eligibility and work search requirements under the Unemployment Compensation Law and to declare an emergency.

HB 585 - Education Requirements: To waive certain primary and secondary education requirements to account for school closings in compliance with the Director of Health's order due to the implications of COVID-19 and to declare an emergency.

HB 586 - Government Purchases: To require any state agency seeking to purchase supplies or services to comply with an applicable first or second procurement program and to prohibit any governmental ordering office from combining multiple parts of a larger related project to avoid using the procurement list maintained by community rehabilitation programs.

HB 587 - School Choice Reform: To suspend all performance-based Educational Choice scholarships for the 2020-2021 school year, to make changes to the Educational Choice Scholarship Program and the expansion of that program for the 2021-2022 school year and each school year thereafter, and to declare an emergency.

HB 588 - Public Assistance: To delay eligibility redeterminations for certain public assistance programs, temporarily modify income eligibility requirements for certain public assistance programs, and to declare an emergency.

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HB 589 - Business Insurance: To require insurers offering business interruption insurance to cover losses attributable to viruses and pandemics and to declare an emergency.

HB 590 - Price Gouging: To prohibit price gouging after a declaration of an emergency and to declare an emergency.

HB 591 - Municipal Income Tax: To suspend some employer municipal income tax withholding requirements during the COVID-19 state of emergency and to declare an emergency.

HB 592 - Health Center Funding: To make an appropriation for the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers and to declare an emergency.

HB 593 - Paid Leave: To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

HB 594 - Retiree Employment: Regarding re-employment of a retiree as a police officer, firefighter, or emergency medical worker during a state of emergency, to allow a deferred retirement option plan participant to work past the participant's employment end date during a state of emergency, and to declare an emergency.

HB 595 - Student Transcripts: To require institutions of higher education to release student transcripts regardless of student-owed institutional debt.

SB 294 - Elections: To extend absent voting by mail for the March 17, 2020, primary election to April 28, 2020, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

SB 295 - Liquor Permit Fees: To require the Director of Commerce to refund certain liquor permit fees for liquor permits that are impacted by the Director of Health's order relating to bars and restaurants issued on March 15, 2020.

SB 296 - Death Penalty: To abolish the death penalty.

SB 297 - Evictions: To prohibit foreclosure activity and the eviction of residential and commercial tenants during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19, to refer such proceedings caused by the state of emergency to mediation, and to declare an emergency.

SB 298 - COVID-19 Information: To require the department of health to make the COVID-19 web site and phone hotline accessible in multiple languages and to declare an emergency

SB 299 - Paid Leave: To require paid leave for an employee who is unable to work due to quarantine or mandatory isolation, to create a grant program to compensate contract workers who cannot perform services during public health emergencies, to make an appropriation, and to declare an emergency.

SB 300 - License Plate: To create the "East Europeans of Ohio" license plate.

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