

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

February 16, 2018

Around the Square

House Consolidation Plan Sees Opposition

The House is working to propose a consolidation of state education and workforce agencies in House Bill 512, however members of the Senate are against the measure. Senator Peggy Lehner, chair of the Senate Education Committee, is against the bill stating it has a lack of broad stakeholder engagement in drafting the plan. The bill, if enacted, would limit the State Board of Education's authority and would combine the departments of education and higher education with the Office of Workforce Transformation to create the Department of Learning and Achievement. Senator Lehner feels those who serve and are engaged in the system should have been pulled more into this process rather than those governing the departments.

Pillich Leaves Governor's Race

Connie Pillich withdrew from the Democratic Governor's race on Wednesday and has given her support to Richard Cordray. With Pillich out, there are seven candidates remaining. They are Richard Cordray with his running mate Betty Sutton, Senator Joe Schiavoni, former congressman Dennis Kucinich, former Supreme Court justice Bill O'Neill, Cleveland Clinic doctor Jonathan Heavey, and former exotic dancer Larry Ealy.

Political News and Notes

ACLU Files Lawsuit

The American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio filed a lawsuit challenging a recent law prohibiting doctors from performing abortions based on a Down Syndrome diagnosis. The lawsuit was filed against the state Health Department, state medical board and county prosecutors for carrying out the 2017 law. The suit was filed in Cincinnati on behalf of Preterm in Cleveland, Planned Parenthood and other Ohio abortion providers.

Pro-Labor Group Opposes Right to Work

With Republican lawmakers proposing right to work amendments, Policy Matters Ohio released a report highlighting research to support backing off union regulation. The liberal leaning research institute is supportive of opposing right to work laws, raising the minimum wage, and other pro-worker policies. These amendments, proposed by Rep Riedel and Rep Becker, would officially make Ohio a Right to Work state and would appear on the 2020 ballot.

CDC Report

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 5,256 in a 12-month period for Ohio from drug overdoses. This is a 39% increase from the previous report. Lawmakers are pushing for legislation to combat the issue, while Governor Kasich and the State Board of Pharmacy are targeting drug distributors in an effort to identify and halt suspicious activity.

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