

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

January 25, 2019

Around the Square

Proposed Rate Cuts

The Bureau of Worker's Compensation board of directors is considering a proposed rate cut for private employers, the largest in almost 60 years. On Thursday, CEO Stephanie McCloud introduced a 20 percent reduction in the average premium rate. The board is expected to vote on the proposal on February 22, and if passed, the reduced rate would go into effect on July 1. The proposed changes would save employers \$244 million for fiscal year 2019.

Political News and Notes

Minority Leadership Elected

The leadership changes in the House continued this week with the Democratic caucus electing Representative Emilia Sykes to serve as House Minority Leader. The informal caucus vote took place on Wednesday and must be approved by the full chamber on February 6. In addition to confirming Representative Sykes as Minority Leader, the Democratic caucus also chose Representative Kristin Boggs as Assistant Minority Leader, Representative Kent Smith as Minority Whip and Representative Paula Hicks-Hudson as Assistant Minority Whip. The House Republican caucus has yet to announce their leadership selection or informal vote date.

Administration Discuss Career-Tech Support

Both Governor Mike DeWine and Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted stated their support for and commitment to developing career technical educational opportunities for all Ohioans at a legislative seminar on Wednesday. The Governor stated that he hoped to direct more state funding towards equipment used for vocational training. The Lieutenant Governor echoed these sentiments and pledged to focus on integrating more of these educational opportunities into his workforce development plans as the leader of InnovateOhio.

Bail Reform Task Force

Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor has convened a task force dedicated to studying the state's bail system and making recommendations for improvement. The 24 member committee convened earlier this week and is expected to release a report on their findings in April. Among other things, the group will compare Ohio's bail and pretrial systems to other states' systems as well as study legal precedent challenging the use of cash bail.

Federal Shutdown Affect on Ohio

Governor DeWine has asked his cabinet members to report how the federal government shutdown could potentially effect their agencies and the state's budget planning process. A few state legislators have proposed a plan to use the state's rainy days funds to protect public-aid programs, while others at the federal level have temporarily refused their government salaries.

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