

# Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

July 26, 2019

## Around the Square

### Medicaid Enrollment

The number of Ohio children enrolled in Medicaid has dropped by 37,000 or three percent from February of 2018 to April of 2019. At the same time the number of uninsured children has risen. This is cause for great concern for many Ohio lawmakers, who wrote to Ohio Medicaid Director, Maureen Corcoran. Corcoran said that there are a variety of likely explanations but, in part, can be explained by those who do not respond to Medicaid eligibility re-determinations, which leads them to be dropped from enrollment. The lack of response can somewhat be attributed to changing addresses, which is an issue that the Department of Medicaid is looking to resolve. Additionally, many have gained health insurance through alternative means or because their family income has risen above the limit for Medicaid eligibility. For children, eligibility starts at 200% of the federal poverty level. The drop in Medicaid enrollment for children has been a national trend.

## Political News and Notes

### Bail Reform

This week the Task force to Examine the Ohio Bail System, which consisted of 30 members with various backgrounds, such as judges, prosecutors, and lawmakers, determined that Ohio should change its bail system to be more fair and to save taxpayer money. Currently, housing an individual for one day in jail costs \$65 compared to \$5 for supervised release. Furthermore, in Ohio, about six out of ten inmates are awaiting trial because they are too poor to afford bail. That means they are unable to work, go to school, or care for their children. The task force, which plans to review their findings in August, recommended that risk assessment tools be available to judges who are setting bail, expansion of pretrial supervision capacity like electronic monitoring, and more.

### Energy Bill

On Tuesday the Ohio Legislature passed House Bill 6 in a 51-38 vote, and it was then signed into law by Governor Mike DeWine. Under the passed version of the bill, from 2021 until 2027 all Ohio electric customers will pay a monthly surcharge starting at 85 cents for residential customers and running up to \$2,400 for large industrial plant. Additionally, starting in January of 2020 customers will have to pay up to \$1.50 monthly and up to \$1,500 a month for industrial users to subsidize coal plants in Ohio and Indiana. At the same time, Ohio's energy-efficient and renewable-energy mandates for utilities will end, which currently costs the average residential customer \$4,74 a month. Estimates indicate that House Bill 6 will save the typical residential customer \$3,78 a month compared to their current costs. However, opponents still strongly reject this legislation as it provides a corporate bailout to FirstEnergy Solutions and eliminates renewable standards.

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