

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse

March 13, 2020

Around the Square

Coronavirus Update

Governor Mike DeWine announced Thursday that all Ohio K-12 schools will close at the end of the day Monday, March 16th until April 3rd. The closing will not extend to childcare and daycare centers. Additional precautions include banning gatherings of over 100 people, a cease in all visitation to nursing homes and psychiatric hospitals, and testing of certain healthcare employees in these facilities. Weddings, funerals, and religious gatherings can proceed at the discretion of individual organizers. These announcements follow the confirmation of a fifth case of COVID-19 in Ohio, two of which are community spread, meaning that the individuals contracted the virus without traveling abroad.

All community colleges and many four-year institutions around the state have implemented similar measures in suspending face to face instruction, though no cases are known to have impacted any enrolled students. Nationally, many professional sports agencies, including the NBA, NHL, and MLS have indefinitely postponed their seasons. In addition, the NCAA has suspended collegiate sport events, including the men's and women's March Madness Tournaments. Major motion pictures set to release in theaters in the coming weeks have also delayed their premiers.

Ohio now has the capacity to test up to 1,200 potential patients upon the receipt of two additional testing kits. Governor DeWine emphasized that all precautionary measures will be temporary, but he warned that the situation is likely to worsen before it improves. For all COVID-19 updates, follow Gov. DeWine's briefing daily at 2 pm [here](#).

Political News and Notes

Charter School Regulations

Forthcoming legislation from Rep. Jeff Crossman and Rep. Gayle Manning would mandate that all charter school operators attain non-profit status by July 1, 2023. For-profit institutions would be faced with the options of forming a nonprofit, contracting with an educational service center, or closing. Charter school financial records would also become subject to public record requests under the legislation. Speaker of the House Larry Householder has previously expressed informal support for the notion of required non-profit status. Ohio currently maintains 178 charter schools that contract with a for-profit operator.

Polling Locations

Many polling locations for the primary elections on Tuesday, March 17th have been relocated out of facilities housing senior citizens. Secretary of State Frank LaRose has encouraged voters to seek early voting opportunities and to utilize the absentee curbside drop-off available at all County Board of Elections on election day. In anticipation of many poll workers dropping out, the Secretary has also called for individuals to fulfill a "patriotic duty" and volunteer to station polling locations. In the 2018 General Election, over two thirds of poll workers were over the age of 62, so the Secretary is relying on new young volunteers to ensure that the primary can proceed as planned.

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

This Week's Bills

HB 548 - Month Designation: To designate April as "Sarcoidosis Awareness Month."

HB 549 - Charter Schools: Regarding the operation, management, and accountability of community schools.

HB 550 - Motorcycle Safety: To make changes to the laws related to the motorcycle safety and education program.

HB 551 - Animal Euthanasia: To prohibit an animal shelter from using a gas chamber to euthanize an animal and to make changes to the law governing euthanasia of an animal by lethal injection.

HB 552 - Juvenile Sentencing: Regarding a bar against a sentence of life without parole, and special parole dates, for offenders who committed the offense when under age 18.

SB 292 - E-School Attendance: Regarding student attendance at internet or computer-based community schools that are not dropout prevention and recovery schools.

SR 488 - 2020 Census: To recognize the importance of the 2020 decennial census and to support all efforts by state and local governments to ensure a complete and accurate count of all Ohioans.

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