

# THIS WEEK AT THE STATEHOUSE JUNE 26, 2020



## CURRENT COVID STATS

### Ohio:

- 44,221 confirmed cases
- 7,502 hospitalizations
- 2,530 confirmed fatalities

### United States:

- 2.47 million cases
- 126,000+ fatalities

### World:

- 9.63 million cases
- 490,000+ fatalities

## Racism as Public Health Crisis

The Senate Health, Human Services, & Medicaid Committee discussed SCR 14, a resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis. Despite only accepting written testimony Wednesday, the committee heard from a myriad of proponents. Witnesses described their own experiences with systemic racism, and experts provided data which reflect the public health effects of systemic racism. Many leaders, including Ronnie Dunn (Cleveland St. University), Shannon Isom (Ohio YWCAs), and Harini Ushasi (The Ohio State University), noted how the COVID-19 pandemic has not only impacted a disproportionate amount of black communities, but has only exacerbated the lack of trust which black communities have in institutions. Senator Thomas stated he was already prepared to vote favorably on the bill despite only having two hearings. Thomas also noted the source of some racial health disparities: funding.

## NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

### Monday:

### Tuesday:

-Possible Senate session and committees

### Wednesday:

-Possible Senate session and committees

### Thursday:

-Weekly Unemployment Report

### Friday:

## School Reopening

On Wednesday, the Senate Education Committee heard testimony regarding SB 320, a bill that would delegate school reopening procedures to local governments. However, eight separate teachers' unions and organizations spoke in opposition to the measure, stating that many school districts do not have the proper resources or expertise to make the decision. Senators Andy Brenner and Matt Huffman responded by noting that local entities can utilize health experts and recommendations from the state government to make an informed decision. Other groups, such as the Ohio Federation of Teachers, argued for a state-level standard in the fall to ensure the safety of faculty, staff, and students. Groups are also concerned with liability issues. The Alliance for High Quality Education argued how, by requiring school boards to make unilateral decisions, the state government is forcing local districts to become liable for potential health issues.

## Presidential Polling

According to a recent poll conducted by Quinnipiac University, Democrat Joe Biden holds a slight lead over Incumbent President Donald Trump in Ohio. Predictably, Trump polled at 92% of the Republicans, while Biden polled slightly better among Democrats at 93%. However, Biden appears to have narrow lead among Independents at roughly 56%. As polling conductor Tim Malloy noted in the poll's release, "the mantra in GOP and Democratic Campaign Headquarters has to be: Don't lose Ohio".

## **Introduced Bills**

**HB 705: Public Nuisances** – To amend the law regarding public nuisances and blight foreclosure actions and to declare an emergency.

**HB 706: Police Training-** To require peace officers to complete training on de-escalation techniques, implicit bias, procedural justice, and mental health issues, and to require information regarding mental health resources and available support be provided to peace officers annually, and to make an appropriation.

**HB 707: Tear Gas** - To prohibit the use of tear gas by peace officers.

**HB 708: Emergency Plan** - To revise the law regarding emergency management plans and school safety drills and to declare an emergency.

**HB 709: Use of Force** - To establish a database of records of use of force by law enforcement officers.

**HB 710: Police Practices** - To prohibit police officers from engaging in biased policing and other status-based profiling and to require the attorney general's office to establish rules regarding such police practices.

**SB 326: Pregnancy Board-** To modify the laws governing the Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review Board and to designate May as “Maternal Mortality Awareness Month.”

**SB 327: Birth Equity** - To enact the “Save Our Mothers Act” for the purpose of establishing continuing education requirements and an initiative to improve birth equity, reduce peripartum racial and ethnic disparities, and address implicit bias in the healthcare system.

**SB 328: Doula Services-** Related to Medicaid coverage of doula services.

**SB 329: Tanning Services-** To prohibit the provision of sun lamp tanning services to individuals under age 18.

**SB 330: School Funding-** To establish a new method of school financing for internet- and computer-based community schools in which a majority of the students are enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program.

**SB 331: Agency Reviews-** To implement the recommendations of the Sunset Review Committee by terminating or renewing various agencies, and to require a Sunset Review Committee to be convened during each General Assembly.