

**THIS WEEK
AT THE
STATEHOUSE
DECEMBER 17, 2021**



CURRENT COVID STATS

Ohio:

- 1,819,342 confirmed cases
- 5,132 current hospitalizations
- 27,594 confirmed fatalities

United States:

- 50,493,182 million cases
- 802,194 fatalities

World:

- 272,484,051 million cases
- 5,1334,230 fatalities

NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Happy Holidays!

Senate Approves Measure on Medical Marijuana

The medical marijuana measure, which passed 26-5, would allow those with arthritis, migraines and handful of other conditions to qualify for medical marijuana treatment and allow physicians to recommend marijuana for any patient who could see a benefit or relief from symptoms by using the drug. The measure would also expand the growing space for cultivators, among other changes.

The Inform Act Passes House Chamber

HB 272 that cleared the lower chamber is aimed at protecting consumers by preventing counterfeit and stolen goods from being sold online. It passed 69-20.

Rep. Haraz Ghanbari (R-Perrysburg) said the legislation ensures that buyers can contact sellers if an item is faulty or has been misrepresented.

"It will deliver a major blow to organized retail crime here in the state of Ohio," he said.

Challenges to Ohio's New Congressional Maps Continue

Republican mapmakers relied on internal, non-public metrics to ensure their proposed congressional map would favor GOP candidates, parties suing over the map argued Monday. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court also on Monday ordered another round of briefs in a trio of lawsuits challenging the state's legislative maps. That follows oral arguments in those consolidated cases held last week.

In the congressional lawsuits, the challenges accused lawmakers of engineering a "flawed" mapmaking process that violates Article XIX of the Ohio Constitution and urged the court to order the map to be redrawn on the basis that it in part unduly favors Republicans regulating how private businesses can run their companies.

NEWLY INTRODUCED LEGISLATION

HOUSE BILLS

HB 511 – Parole Hearings - To require electronic recordings to be made of all parole board hearings, excluding certain personal identifying information, and to make those electronic recordings "public records" under the Public Records Law

HB 512 – Police and Fire Pension Funds - To increase employer contributions to the Ohio Police and Fire Pension Fund.

HB 513 – Smoke Tax - Regarding the deduction and recovery of bad debts for cigarette and tobacco and vapor products taxes.

HB 514 – Higher Education - To authorize tax incentives for higher education intern and graduate wages, to make other changes regarding higher education student financial aid, and to make an appropriation.

HB 515 – Tax Exemptions - To exempt from income tax certain gains from the sale of an ownership interest in a business.

HB 518 – Fulton County Municipal Court - Create Fulton County Municipal Court; abolish Fulton County Court

HB 519 – Municipal Tax Extensions - To modify the law regarding extensions for filing municipal income tax returns and to limit penalties for late filings.

HB 520 – Consumer Installment Loans - Regarding precomputed consumer installment loan acceleration and conversion, interest rates, refinance charges, bona fide errors, and remote work for consumer installment lender employees.

SENATE BILLS

SB 274 – Tardive Dyskinesia- to designate the first week of May as "Tardive Dyskinesia Awareness Week."

SB 275 – HIV Testing – Regards consent and refusal for HIV testing

SB 276 –BOE Parental Leave - to allow board of education employees to use accrued sick leave for a parental leave of absence.

SB 277 – Gas Tax & Registration Fees- to temporarily reduce motor fuel excise tax rates and suspend collection of the additional motor vehicle registration taxes on electric and hybrid vehicles, both for five years, and to amend the version of section 4503.10 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on October 1, 2022, to continue the changes to that section on and after that date.