

info@oesca.org • July 15, 2019

This July 15, 2019 Legislative e-Update is provided by OESCA to Ohio's ESCs, their client school districts, and other key education stakeholders. The e-Update provides information on breaking news as well as the education bills of interest to Ohio's public education community introduced during the 133rd General Assembly. Bills are organized by last action date and include the current status with most recent activity listed first in descending order. There are also links to the state bill page for users to download any bills, analyses or fiscal notes. The document concludes with the latest news on ESCs and from Capitol Square.

Breaking News

Budge Watch 2019 – Day 15

Amid rumblings that progress is being made in negotiations around the FY20-21 budget, HB166, the Ohio Senate confirmed that it will be meeting on Wednesday, July 17 while also setting an "if needed" session for Tuesday, July 16.

Likewise the House has scheduled July 17-18 for "as needed" session days. The Speaker has also set the next session date for Wednesday, Sept. 18 (with an "if needed" session on Tuesday, Sept. 17). The last definite session of the year is on Thursday, Dec. 12 although "if needed" sessions are set for Tuesday-Thursday, Dec. 17-19.

In addition, the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee will meet on Monday, July 15 for its ninth hearing on HB6 (Callender-Wilkin). It is rumored that ongoing debate on HB 6 related to energy regulation and more specifically First Energy, has impacted budget negotiations as well.

Legislative Tracking Report

BILL MONITORING

The following education bill of interest are monitored by OESCA on behalf of the membership and client districts:

SB4 **SCHOOL FACILITIES ASSISTANCE** (RULLI M, KUNZE S) To make a capital appropriation for school facilities assistance.

Current Status: 7/12/2019 - Informally Passed

Recent Status: 7/11/2019 - Informally Passed

7/10/2019 - Informally Passed

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-4>

HB310 **SCHOOL BULLYING AND HAZING** (GREENSPAN D) To enact the "Ohio Anti-Bullying and Hazing Act" with regard to school discipline and bullying and hazing policies at public schools and colleges.

Current Status: 7/9/2019 - Introduced

Recent Status:

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-310>

- HB305 SCHOOL FINANCING** (CUPP B, PATTERSON J) To create a new school financing system, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 6/30/2019 - Referred to Committee House Finance
Recent Status: 6/26/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-305>
- HB164 STUDENT RELIGIOUS RIGHTS** (GINTER T) Regarding student religious expression and to entitle the act the "Ohio Student Religious Liberties Act of 2019."
Current Status: 6/26/2019 - **REPORTED OUT**, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)
Recent Status: 5/28/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)
4/30/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-164>
- HB166 OPERATING BUDGET** (OELSLAGER S) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2021, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.
Current Status: 6/25/2019 - , (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 6/21/2019 - Senate Finance, (Fourteenth Hearing)
6/20/2019 - Senate Appoints Managers; M. Dolan, D. Burke and S. O'Brien Named as Senate Conferees.
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-166>
- HB154 DISSOLVE DISTRESS COMMISSIONS** (MILLER J, JONES D) To dissolve academic distress commissions and to instead require the creation of community learning centers for buildings in low-performing school districts.
Current Status: 6/25/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 5/15/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
5/1/2019 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Vote 83-12
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-154>
- HB294 SCHOOL BULLYING** (DENSON S, MILLER A) To modify the definition of school harassment, intimidation, or bullying.
Current Status: 6/25/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
Recent Status: 6/19/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-294>
- SB168 SERVICES FOR STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE MEALS** (YUKO K, MAHARATH T) To enact the "Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act" to require schools to provide certain services to students who are eligible for free or reduced price meals.
Current Status: 6/19/2019 - Introduced
Recent Status:
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-168>

- HB165** **HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS** (LISTON B, GALONSKI T) Regarding the adoption of health education standards.
- Current Status:* 6/18/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Third Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 6/4/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
5/28/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-165>
- HB123** **SCHOOL SAFETY TRAINING** (HOLMES G, MANNING G) With regard to school security and youth suicide awareness education and training.
- Current Status:* 6/18/2019 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fifth Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 6/11/2019 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)
5/28/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Fourth Hearing)
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-123>
- HB12** **CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NETWORK** (MANNING D, WEST T) To create the Ohio Children's Behavioral Health Prevention Network Stakeholder Group.
- Current Status:* 6/13/2019 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Vote 86-3
- Recent Status:* 6/13/2019 - Bills for Third Consideration
6/11/2019 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House Health, (Third Hearing)
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-12>
- HB111** **SCHOOL RECORD TRANSFER** (INGRAM C) To require that public and private schools transmit a transferred student's records within five school days.
- Current Status:* 6/11/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-111>
- HB43** **SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY ACQUISITION** (INGRAM C) To eliminate the right of first refusal for certain schools in the acquisition of school district real property.
- Current Status:* 6/11/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-43>

- SB134** **PASSING SCHOOL BUSES** (GAVARONE T) To make changes to the law governing passing a school bus, to create a new offense for vehicular homicide and vehicular assault related to improperly passing a stopped school bus, to make an appropriation, and to designate this the School Bus Safety Act.
- Current Status:* 6/11/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce
- Recent Status:* 4/22/2019 - Introduced
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-134>
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- SB147** **OHIO SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM** (HOAGLAND F) To create the Ohio School Marshal Program.
- Current Status:* 6/4/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
- Recent Status:* 5/9/2019 - Introduced
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-147>
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- HB90** **UNBORN CHILD EDUCATION** (ANTANI N) To require the development of an instructional program and educational and informational materials and the dissemination of those materials to protect the humanity of the unborn child.
- Current Status:* 6/4/2019 - House Health, (Sixth Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 5/28/2019 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Health, (Fifth Hearing)
4/30/2019 - House Health, (Fourth Hearing)
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-90>
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- HB231** **FREE EPINEPHRINE PROGRAMS** (GREENSPAN D) To require the Department of Education to notify public and private schools of free epinephrine autoinjector programs and to enact the "Allison Rose Suhy Act" with regard to food allergy training for public schools and institutions of higher education.
- Current Status:* 5/21/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 5/8/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
5/2/2019 - Introduced
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-231>
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- SB26** **TAX DEDUCTION-TEACHER CLASSROOM SUPPLIES** (KUNZE S) To authorize a state income tax deduction for teachers' out-of-pocket expenses for professional development and classroom supplies.
- Current Status:* 5/14/2019 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
- Recent Status:* 5/8/2019 - **PASSED BY SENATE**; Vote 32-0
5/8/2019 - Bills for Third Consideration
- State Bill Page:* <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-26>
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- SB34** **SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND EDUCATOR LICENSURE** (KUNZE S) Regarding school employee employment and educator licensure and conduct.
- Current Status:* 5/7/2019 - Senate Education, (Fifth Hearing)
- Recent Status:* 4/9/2019 - Senate Education, (Fourth Hearing)
3/26/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-34>

- SB102** **DYSLEXIA SCREENING PROGRAM** (BRENNER A, LEHNER P) To establish the Dyslexia Screening Program for school districts and other public schools.
Current Status: 5/7/2019 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/26/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
3/21/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-102>
- SB89** **CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION** (HUFFMAN M) With regard to career-technical education and the compensation of joint vocational school districts located in enterprise zones.
Current Status: 5/7/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)
Recent Status: 4/2/2019 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)
3/19/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-89>
- SB121** **HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS** (SYKES V, KUNZE S) To require the State Board of Education to adopt health education standards and to require that only statewide venereal disease education standards and curriculum be approved by the General Assembly.
Current Status: 5/7/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
3/26/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-121>
- SB126** **CRISIS ASSESSMENTS-SUICIDAL YOUTH** (MANNING N) To authorize a mental health professional to provide a crisis assessment, without parental consent, to a minor who is or is believed to be suicidal and to make an appropriation to support the employment of social workers or mental or behavioral health professionals at educational service centers.
Current Status: 5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Health, Human Services and Medicaid
Recent Status: 4/9/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-126>
- SB128** **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS** (HUFFMAN M) To make changes to the Educational Choice Scholarship Program and the Cleveland Scholarship Program.
Current Status: 5/1/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance
Recent Status: 4/9/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-128>
- HB23** **F-1 VISA SCHOOL ATHLETICS** (ANTANI N) To authorize any student from a country or province outside the United States who holds an F-1 visa to participate in interscholastic athletics.
Current Status: 4/30/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)
Recent Status: 2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-23>

SB109 **WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM** (SCHURING K) To establish the Workforce Scholarship Program, to terminate the provisions of the Scholarship Program on December 31, 2023, to authorize tax credits for graduates of the Scholarship Program and their employers, and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 4/24/2019 - Senate Finance, (First Hearing)

Recent Status: 3/21/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance
3/13/2019 - Introduced

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-109>

SB110 **ACADEMIC DISTRESS COMMISSIONS** (MANNING N) To modify the operation of academic distress commissions in certain school districts.

Current Status: 4/9/2019 - Senate Education, (Third Hearing)

Recent Status: 4/2/2019 - Senate Education, (Second Hearing)
3/26/2019 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-110>

HB127 **DISTRESS COMMISSION MORATORIUM** (SMITH K, HAMBLEY S) To prohibit the creation of new academic distress commissions.

Current Status: 4/9/2019 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Primary and Secondary Education, (Second Hearing)

Recent Status: 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-127>

HB132 **SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS** (MANNING D) Regarding notice of school child immunization requirements and exemptions.

Current Status: 4/2/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

Recent Status: 3/19/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/12/2019 - Introduced

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-132>

SB104 **INTERDISTRICT OPEN ENROLLMENT** (HILL B) Regarding funding for students enrolled in community schools, STEM schools, and other districts through interdistrict open enrollment.

Current Status: 3/27/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education

Recent Status: 3/13/2019 - Introduced

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-104>

HB121 **TAX CREDIT-CLASSROOM MATERIALS** (SCHAFFER T) To allow a credit against the personal income tax for amounts spent by teachers for instructional materials.

Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/5/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-121>

HB118 **SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION (MANNING D)** Regarding student transportation to and from school.

Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Transportation and Public Safety, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Transportation and Public Safety
3/4/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-118>

HB122 **OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (KOEHLER K)** To eliminate the Educational Choice Scholarship Pilot Program and Pilot Project Scholarship Program and to create the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Current Status: 3/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)
Recent Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education
3/5/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-122>

SB85 **SCHOOL ZONE SPEED LIMITS (MAHARATH T)** To establish signage requirements for indicating school zones for speed limit purposes, and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance
Recent Status: 3/6/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-85>

SB81 **PROHIBIT USE OF SECLUSION IN SCHOOLS (MAHARATH T)** To prohibit the use of seclusion in public schools.

Current Status: 3/12/2019 - Referred to Committee Senate Education
Recent Status: 3/6/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-81>

HB105 **SCHOOL BUS STOP (BROWN R, SCHERER G)** To enhance the penalty for failing to stop for a school bus that is picking up or dropping off school children when the offender has a prior violation within a five-year period.

Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
Recent Status: 2/26/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-105>

HB83 **SCHOOL BUS PHOTO EVIDENCE (BROWN R, SCHAFFER T)** To allow images captured by a camera installed on a school bus to be used as corroborating evidence for the offense of failing to stop for a school bus.

Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice

Recent Status: 2/19/2019 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-83>

HB89 **FAILURE TO STOP-SCHOOL BUS** (ANTANI N) To enhance the penalties for failing to properly stop for a school bus, to establish requirements related to informing the public about that prohibition, and to make an appropriation.

Current Status: 3/5/2019 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice

Recent Status: 2/20/2019 - Introduced

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-89>

HB22 **OFCC ODE-SCHOOL BUILDING AMENITIES** (ANTANI N) To require the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission and the Department of Education to conduct a study regarding certain school building amenities.

Current Status: 2/19/2019 - House Primary and Secondary Education, (First Hearing)

Recent Status: 2/12/2019 - Referred to Committee House Primary and Secondary Education

2/12/2019 - Introduced

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-22>

Capital Square in Review

ADDICTION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association (BSSA) is working with the Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative (RALI) of Ohio to provide sheriffs' offices throughout the state with safe drug disposal kits and educational materials for upcoming county fairs, local festivals and other gatherings. RALI Ohio, an alliance of more than 25 organizations representing an array of Ohio communities affected by the opioid epidemic, has been working to promote prevention, treatment and recovery programs that work.

FY18-19 BUDGET

The state of Ohio ended FY19 on June 30 with tax revenues \$651.1 million over estimates, according to preliminary data released Friday by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM). FY19 tax revenue exceeded that of FY18 by over \$1 billion. A total of nearly \$23.5 billion was collected over the course of FY19 compared to \$22.4 billion in FY18. Total tax receipts finished June \$34.3 million or 1.6 percent over the estimate for the month established by OBM at the beginning of FY19 and exceeded June 2018 total tax receipts by \$22.8 million.

FY20-21 BUDGET

Ohio House Democratic Leader Emilia Strong Sykes (D-Akron) responded to a recent comment Gov. Mike DeWine made to the *Columbus Dispatch* saying that he has urged House and Senate leaders to deal with their differences over tax breaks for small businesses in a separate bill rather than in the budget in order to move passage of the measure along. Sykes said, "We have a constitutional obligation to pass a responsible, balanced budget, and rushing a bill through that guts critical tax fairness provisions without considering the fiscal impact on our state's bottom line is not only irresponsible, it's reckless."

Not surprisingly, NFIB Ohio, which has opposed the House-passed version that trimmed the small business deduction, issued a statement in support of the governor's proposal. Roger Geiger, NFIB Ohio vice president and executive director, said, "Small business owners across Ohio stand with Gov. DeWine's call to move forward in passing Ohio's operating budget without changing the business investor deduction. NFIB agrees it is time to adopt a budget with no new tax increases. As the economic engine that creates two of the three new jobs in Ohio, small business owners appreciate the strong stance of Gov. DeWine that raising taxes on small businesses in the state would be a mistake at this time."

House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) and Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) met on Monday morning, July 8, while House Finance Committee Chairman Scott Oelslager (R-North Canton) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman Matt Dolan (R-Chagrin Falls) were scheduled to meet that afternoon to further discuss budget bill HB166 (Oelslager), Obhof told reporters Monday. "I would expect some variation of one or both of those meetings to happen every day until we have a resolution," Obhof said following the Senate's non-voting session. "I feel good about where we're at today."

Gov. Mike DeWine told reporters Thursday that he was confident a resolution would be reached regarding the state budget soon, stressing that both the House and Senate versions were "good budgets" and consistent with his goals regarding the addiction crisis, supporting young people and early childhood programs, water quality, Lake Erie and job training. "It's time to get a budget, and I'm happy that they're talking, they're working," DeWine said. He said he's been in regular contact with Senate President Larry Obhof (R-Medina) and House Speaker Larry Householder (R-Glenford) but "the job of the governor is to weigh in early and to weigh in late" and they are in the middle of the process.

EDUCATION

The State Board of Education Monday welcomed its two newest governor-appointed members and held an abbreviated discussion on education issues in the Senate-approved version of the state budget while legislators in both chambers continue to work toward consensus. Reggie Wilkinson, former director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, and Stephen Dackin, superintendent of school and community partnerships at Columbus State Community College, were sworn into their positions by Judge Edmund Sargus Monday after being appointed by Gov. Mike DeWine in June.

Following Monday morning's committee meetings, Superintendent Paolo DeMaria updated the board on several issues, including SuccessBound, the Ohio Department of Education's grant-funded in-demand job promotion program; the superintendent's proposed goals for the upcoming school year; and the lingering education issues left on the table in the biennial budget bill HB166 (Oelslager), which has not yet cleared the General Assembly despite a July 1 deadline and the start of a new fiscal year.

A Franklin County judge is allowing the attorney general's office to attach Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) founder William Lager's Columbus condo to the state's ongoing collections case against Lager. The order for attachment signed by Judge Kimberly Cocroft functions like a lien, meaning that Lager could not sell the property free and clear if the state wins a judgement against him. The property at 155 W. Main St. is in the Waterford condominium tower on the south end of downtown Columbus. Cocroft's order did not attach a second property in Senecaville mentioned in the initial motion for attachment.

At the suggestion of President Laura Kohler, the State Board of Education (SBOE) Tuesday delayed the vote on the resolution increasing the compensation of SBOE members to cover time spent preparing for the board's monthly meetings until the September meeting. The resolution was rereferred to the Executive Committee for revising in light of the day's discussion, with Kohler noting that there was no time urgency for addressing the issue. Under a ruling from the attorney general's office, any compensation increases would not apply to current SBOE members.

Reps. Bob Cupp (R-Lima) and John Patterson (D-Jefferson) called an informal briefing Wednesday to give more explanation and field questions on the details of their updated school funding plan, recently introduced as HB305 (Cupp-Patterson). The representatives also recently released revised district funding simulations based on the

updated plan. The two acknowledged imperfections in their plan and repeatedly implored those identifying them to offer suggestions, not just critiques.

As lawmakers consider if and how to address the controversy over state oversight of struggling school districts in final budget negotiations, the Ohio Supreme Court has scheduled oral arguments in a lawsuit that questions the constitutionality of the law authorizing the academic distress commissions now in control of three school systems. Nearly four months after the last brief was filed, justices decided Tuesday to schedule *Youngstown City School District Board of Education et al v. State of Ohio* for arguments Wednesday, Oct. 23, when the Supreme Court will be holding one of its off-site argument sessions in Williams County.

The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) voted unanimously Thursday to approve a new round of school building and renovation projects for FY20, authorizing funding for work in nine districts. All nine have their local share of funding from voters secure, meaning the projects can go forward pending approval from the Controlling Board. Melanie Drerup, chief of planning for the commission, said the Classroom Facilities Assistance Program (CFAP) projects total nearly \$400 million in work, with an average state share of 47 percent and average project budget of \$44.1 million.

ELECTIONS

House Democrats from Cuyahoga County recently sent a letter to Secretary of State Frank LaRose seeking more information on the effect moving the presidential primary in 2020 will have around the state and particularly in Cuyahoga County. The nine Democrats noted that a provision added to HB166 (Oelslager), the biennial budget, will move the presidential primary from March 10 to March 17, which is St. Patrick's Day. In their letter, they said that day is a huge day of celebration in Cleveland and in their districts, and said they are concerned about the effect it will have on people's ability to vote that day.

ELECTIONS 2019

With the goal of increasing the number of elected women in Ohio political office, the Patriots PAC has endorsed 19 women running for local office in 11 communities in the Nov. 5 General Election. Among them are Holly Brinda, running for Elyria mayor, and Elizabeth Brown, daughter of U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), running for re-election to the Columbus City Council. Other endorsed candidates include three running for local school boards, and one each running for a local auditor slot and clerk of courts.

ELECTIONS 2020

Nikki Foster, a former Air Force pilot who has flown missions during five deployments to the Middle East, launched her campaign for the Democratic nomination for the 1st Congressional District on Monday. Foster, who previously lost a bid for the 54th Ohio House District in 2018, said she is running for Congress "to take on the special interests." She made the announcement at an event in her hometown in Mason, OH. The seat is currently held by U.S. Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Cincinnati), who is expected to run for re-election in 2020.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The nation added 224,000 jobs in June, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) announced Friday, but the unemployment rate and number of unemployed persons showed little change, remaining 3.7 percent and 6.0 million, respectively. BLS said the "little or no change" was also present among all major worker groups and the number of long-term unemployed, or those jobless for 27 weeks or more. Currently, that accounts for 1.4 million people and 23.7 percent of all the unemployed.

The Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS) announced Monday that it was re-introducing the "Leading Indicators" report, which forecasts near-term employment levels for Ohio and its eight largest metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). The reports use a statistical model that employs U.S., state and regional level data to produce an annualized growth rate for the next six months. Since a new methodology was used for this

report it is not comparable to the previous Leading Economic Index, ODJFS noted, and new reports will be available monthly.

ENERGY

Following Wednesday's closed-door meeting on clean-air subsidies in HB6 (Callender-Wilkin), Chairman Steve Wilson (R-Maineville) of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee said the Legislature is still on track to consider further changes and pass a bill out of the upper chamber this month. He could not say, however, how the House would respond to a continuation of renewable energy mandates in the current Senate version or whether HB6 might end up in conference committee, further delaying nuclear subsidies for which FirstEnergy Solutions (FES) has set a revised deadline of July 17 to halt plant closings. Wilson told *Hannah News* that he has finished vetting more than four dozen proposed changes announced at a rare committee meeting on Saturday, June 29, when members accepted only two amendments. They have taken no formal action on the bill since.

FEDERAL

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Youngstown) announced that a grant of \$600,000 has been awarded to Eastgate Regional Council of Governments by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. The grant, part of the EDA Chicago Regional Office's Partnership Planning program, will assist Eastgate with the hiring of a recovery coordinator to assist local stakeholders with identifying the region's assets, and developing and implementing a recovery strategy for Youngstown.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) told reporters Tuesday that he hoped Congress would pass the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) by the August recess, saying it would help support struggling farmers in Ohio as heavy rainfall has hurt crop planting. The bad weather most recently led Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague to re-open the application period for the Agriculture Linked Deposit Program Monday, saying heavy rains and floods have wreaked havoc on farms around Ohio.

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Youngstown) announced the 2019 Congressional App Challenge (CAC) for middle and high school students in Ohio's 13th Congressional District. The CAC accepts computer programs (or apps) written in any programming language, for any platform (desktop/PC, web, mobile, raspberry Pi, etc.). The competition is open to all students who meet the eligibility requirements, regardless of coding experience. Other Ohio Congress members hosting the challenge include U.S. Reps. Bill Johnson (R-Marietta), Bob Gibbs (R-Ashland), Warren Davidson (R-Troy), Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo) and David Joyce (R-Twinsburg).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE

The Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board reports that American Electric Power (AEP) closed a portion of the State Street sidewalk for construction beginning Monday, July 8. The project will also involve closing one or more driving lanes on State Street.

House Minority Leader Emilia Strong Sykes (D-Akron) Monday announced the selection of Amber Epling as communications director for the House Democratic Caucus. She succeeds Jordan Plottner who left the caucus at the end of May.

Rep. Candice Keller (R-Middletown), a salaried executive director of Community Pregnancy Center, potentially violated Ohio ethics laws by co-sponsoring legislation that would provide a refundable tax credit for contributions to anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers like hers, according to the Butler County Democratic Party. Butler County Democratic Party Executive Committee Chairman Brian Hester officially filed a complaint earlier this week with the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee (JLEC), asking the agency to investigate Keller's involvement with HB297 (Ginter-Powell).

Reps. Dave Greenspan (R-Westlake) and Juanita Brent (D-Cleveland) recently introduced HB285 to permanently extend a program which has decreased the number of Ohioans with suspended driver's licenses. Former Rep. John

Barnes, the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation and the Ohio State Bar Association have all offered public support for the bill.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Ohio State University (OSU) is proposing a 3.3 percent tuition increase for incoming in-state freshman to the Columbus, pending approval from its board of trustees and the passage of the state operating budget. OSU notes that that incoming freshman class will be its third cohort to join the university's tuition guarantee program, freezing the rate for four years. Aid packages will be increased \$358, equal to the hike, to keep those students with financial need unaffected. On the OSU Columbus campus, in-state student tuition and fees would run \$11,084 per year for incoming first-year students, going up to \$23,792 per year with the most common housing and dining plans included.

The University of Akron (UA) recently announced new degree and certificate program offerings that are targeting growing sectors of the workforce and in-demand skills. Beginning in fall 2019, UA will offer a Bachelor of Science degree in allied health care administration, a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in business data analytics and an undergraduate certificate in biomimicry, the latter being the first of its kind in Ohio.

TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft announced Tuesday that it is partnering with Watch Communications, an Internet service provider (ISP) in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, to expand broadband access, especially in rural areas. The partnership is part of Microsoft's Airband Initiative, aimed at extending broadband access to three million people in rural America by July 2022. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has found that 21 million Americans lack broadband access, while Microsoft found that 162 million people do not use the Internet at broadband speeds, including 17 million people in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

Ohio is now home to the "largest, most comprehensive contained testing site in North America for advanced vehicle technologies," Transportation Research Center (TRC) executives and DeWine administration leaders said Wednesday. Lt. Gov. Jon Husted and Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Director Jack Marchbanks were among the state officials helping TRC and its partners cut the ribbon at the \$45 million SMARTCenter, located on TRC's approximately 4,500-acre property in East Liberty.

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