

Byers, Minton and Associates

This Week at the Statehouse
June 15, 2018

Around the Square

Budget Surplus Decisions

With the fiscal year coming to a close, officials from the Office of Budget and Management are preparing for a year-end surplus. The improvement is driven by economic progress and increased opportunities for employment within the state. Current plans are to deposit a portion of the dollars into the state's "rainy day" fund. Some lawmakers have suggested contributing these funds to help local governments, infrastructure, school safety initiatives or addiction prevention services. OBM stated that tax revenues were more than \$400 million above estimates and disbursements were \$300 million below estimates, a huge shift from last year when the government faced a deficit of around \$1.1 billion.

Task Force Gives Addiction Prevention Recommendations

A task force made up of health insurers and led by Attorney General Mike DeWine released a report earlier this week on addiction prevention, intervention and treatment recommendations for the state of Ohio. Several months of examining the state's health plans have led to 15 recommendations to address the opioid crisis. Recommendations include targeted drug education, lock-in pharmacy programs, multidisciplinary care for pregnant opioid users and increased coverage for non-pharmacological pain treatments. The report encourages government entities, private institutions and medical/mental health professionals to work together on solutions to the opioid epidemic.

Political News and Notes

Education Board Adopts Strategic Plan

The State Board of Education voted on Tuesday to adopt a strategic education plan for the years 2019-2024. The plan establishes core principles to ensure that state schools see improvement in the percentage of graduates who pursue higher education, employment or military service within one year of graduation. Board members spoke to the strength of the collaborative process and the need for continued oversight for a successful implementation. The strategic plan was approved almost unanimously with a 15-1 vote.

U.S. Supreme Court Decision on Voter Registration

In a 5-4 decision led by Justice Samuel Alito, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to uphold Ohio's process for updating voter registration rolls on Monday. The court determined that the state's method of removing voters after 2 years of inactivity did not violate the National Voter Registration Act. The Ohio Secretary of State's office has confirmed that the cancellation process will not go into effect until after elections are held in August and November of this year, with an official start date to be announced at a later time.

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