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| **GOVERNMENTAL POLICY GROUP, INC.**  17 SOUTH HIGH STREET – SUITE 245  COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215-3413  PHONE: 614-461-9335  FAX: 614-461-9336  Coalition of Ohio Regional Districts  Legislative Activities Report  **August 2017** |

Both the House and Senate have now entered summer recess after a hectic budget cycle, which saw the House override 11 of Governor Kasich’s 47 vetoes. While the Senate has yet to act on the veto overrides, it is important to note that they have until the end of the General Assembly to address them. The House is also able to override additional vetoes should leadership feel the need in the future. The Ohio Senate has scheduled session on August 16th and 23rd. The House is not scheduled to return until mid-September.

Also of note, opponents to the practice of submetering have requested a rehearing for the closely-watched case that saw the PUCO decide that submetering rates cannot exceed that of regulated utilities. The commission’s ruling essentially reserved the right for the PUCO to step in should a submetering company’s charges exceed that of its regulated counterparts. It also determined that the commission would enforce that standard on a case by case basis. Despite the ruling, utilities and consumer advocates argue the decision does little to protect Ohioans from the practice of submetering.

In other headlines, Governor John Kasich recently signed a bill aimed at strengthening the state’s environmental regulatory authority. The legislation, SB 2, bolsters the Lake Erie Commission, updates construction and demolition debris disposal regulations, and requires all public water systems to establish asset management plans. “Improving Lake Erie and protecting our environment has been a priority for our administration and we are pleased that our package of reforms received such overwhelming bipartisan support,” a spokesman for Governor Kasich said. Through discussions with the Kasich Administration, we expect a second bill containing additional compressive EPA reforms to be introduced in the fall.

Also of interest, campaign finance reports were recently released showing fund-raising efforts for the first six months of the year. In the race for governor, U.S. Rep. Jim Renacci raised the most with $5.575 million, although $4 million of that came from his own funds. Renacci has $4.379 million on hand. Attorney General Mike DeWine reported $4.674 million on hand, Secretary of State Jon Husted reported $4.277 million on hand and Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor has $436,883 on hand. Among the Democratic candidates for governor, state Sen. Joe Schiavoni, R-Boardman, raised $370,729 for a balance of $245,251. Former U.S. Rep. Betty Sutton, R-Barberton, brought in $276,043 and reported a balance of $209,680. Former Rep. Connie Pillich, of Montgomery, was the top fundraiser, generating $551,855. She had $720,526 on hand. Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley, raised $465,635 and had $394,662 on hand in her mayoral campaign account. She cannot create a state fund-raising account until she completes her simultaneous campaign for mayor this fall. Republican caucuses in the Ohio House and Senate also outpaced their Democratic counterparts in fundraising. In the Senate, the Republican Senate Campaign Committee raised $2.5 million and had that same amount in the bank at the close of the period. Ohio Senate Democrats, by contrast, reported receiving $69,566 - $68,468 of which was spent - leaving them with $3,883 on hand. In the House, the Ohio House Republican Organizational Committee raised $2.8 million and had nearly $2.6 million remaining on hand after $431,047 in expenditures. The House Democratic Caucus Fund reported taking in $417,844, spending $187,755 and an on-hand balance of $251,792.

We have been tracking the following legislation during the 132nd General Assembly:

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| **HB3** | **DATAOHIO BOARD CREATION** (DUFFEY M, HAGAN C) To create the DataOhio Board, to specify requirements for posting public records online, to require the Auditor of State to adopt rules regarding a uniform accounting system for public offices, to establish an online catalog of public data at data.Ohio.gov, to establish the Local Government Information Exchange Grant Program, and to make appropriations. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/8/2017 - Referred to Committee House Finance |
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| **HB26** | **TRANSPORTATION-PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET** (MCCOLLEY R) To make appropriations for programs related to transportation and public safety for the biennium beginning July 1, 2017, and ending June 30, 2019, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of those programs. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/31/2017 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; Some provisions line-item vetoed, eff. 90 days |
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| **HB29** | **MUNICIPAL WATER RESERVOIR BUFFERS** (LELAND D, BOGGS K) To eliminate law authorizing the maintenance of buffers around municipal water reservoirs by contiguous property owners. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/25/2017 - House Energy and Natural Resources, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB31** | **CONTRACTING ADVISORY COUNCIL-ABOLITION** (CUPP B) To abolish the Government Contracting Advisory Council. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/21/2017 - Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB40** | **GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE DATABASE** (DEVER J, GREENSPAN D) To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/28/2017 - House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB49** | **OPERATING BUDGET** (SMITH R) Creates FY 2018-2019 main operating budget. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/6/2017 - Consideration of Governor's Veto; Remaining Veto Items Left Pending by House |
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| **HB51** | **DEPARTMENT REVIEW SCHEDULE** (FABER K) To require standing committees of the General Assembly to establish a schedule for the periodic review and sunset of state departments that are currently in the Governor's cabinet, and to require that Auditor of State performance audits be scheduled to coincide with the periodic review. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/16/2017 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House State and Local Government, (Fourth Hearing) |
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| **HB54** | **STATE REVENUE OBLIGATIONS** (BLESSING III L) To authorize the Treasurer of State to issue revenue obligations of the state for the purpose of making loans to qualifying public entities for their acquisition of permanent improvements through the Treasurer of State's purchase of public obligations of those qualifying entities. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/15/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |
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| **HB69** | **LEVY REVENUE REIMBURSEMENT** (CUPP B) To require reimbursement of certain township fire and emergency medical service levy revenue forgone because of the creation of a municipal tax increment financing district. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/28/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways and Means |
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| **HB103** | **FISCAL EMERGENCY PROVISIONS** (REINEKE W) To modify the composition and powers of the financial planning and supervision commission of a political subdivision that is in a state of fiscal emergency and to clarify the duties of that political subdivision. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/17/2017 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; Eff. 90 days |
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| **HB114** | **RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARDS** (BLESSING III L) To revise the provisions governing renewable energy, energy efficiency, and peak demand reduction and to alter funding allocations under the Home Energy Assistance Program. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/14/2017 - Senate Energy and Natural Resources, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB121** | **PIPE MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS** (EDWARDS J) To require a public authority to consider all piping materials that meet the engineering specifications for a state-funded water or waste water project. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/9/2017 - House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB122** | **ESTABLISH ECONOMIC STUDY COMMITTEE** (HAMBLEY S, ROGERS J) To establish a Regional Economic Development Alliance Study Committee to study the benefits and challenges involved in creating regional economic development alliances. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/9/2017 - **REPORTED OUT**, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB163** | **PREVAILING WAGE PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS** (ROEGNER K, RIEDEL C) To allow political subdivisions, special districts, and state institutions of higher education to elect to apply the Prevailing Wage Law to public improvement projects. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/9/2017 - House Economic Development, Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB180** | **EQUAL PAY ACT** (CLYDE K, HOWSE S) To require a contractor or person submitting a bid or other proposal for a state contract or a business entity applying for a grant or other economic incentive from a state agency to obtain an equal pay certificate, to require state agencies and political subdivisions to establish a job evaluation system to identify and eliminate sex-based wage disparities among classes of employees, and to prohibit an employer from retaliating against an employee who discusses the employee's salary or wage rate with another employee. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/1/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight |
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| **HB221** | **PRIVATE PROPERTY SEWER AND WATER** (HOLMES G) To expressly include, as eligible projects under the State Capital Improvements Program administered by the Ohio Public Works Commission, water and sewer laterals located on private property. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/23/2017 - Referred to Committee House Finance |
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| **HB249** | **RESIDENTIAL UTILITY RESELLING** (DUFFEY M) To permit the Public Utilities Commission to adopt rules governing residential utility reselling. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/6/2017 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities |
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| **HB254** | **POW/MIA REMEMBERANCE** (WIGGAM S) To enact the POW/MIA Remembrance Act requiring the POW/MIA flag to be displayed at certain buildings operated by the state on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans' Day. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/6/2017 - Referred to Committee House Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security |
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| **HB262** | **INDEPENDENT BUDGET PROCESS** (BUTLER, JR. J, ROMANCHUK M) To provide for the preparation of a state biennial budget independent of that submitted by the Governor and to authorize the Legislative Service Commission, upon the request of the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the President of the Senate, to arrange for an independent actuarial review of a proposed bill, specified analyses of economic policy initiatives and state benchmarking data, and a study of the state's long-range financial outlook. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/20/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight |
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| **HB267** | **LOCAL LIABILITY-VEHICLE NEGLIGENCE** (INGRAM C) To eliminate certain defenses to political subdivision liability for an employee's negligent operation of a motor vehicle and to reduce damages recoverable against a political subdivision in such actions by the contributory fault of the plaintiff or other parties. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/20/2017 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice |
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| **HB271** | **ACCESSIBILITY LAW VIOLATION NOTICE** (MCCOLLEY R, REZABEK J) To authorize an alleged aggrieved party to provide a notice of an alleged accessibility law violation in advance of filing a civil action and to establish the circumstances under which an alleged aggrieved party is entitled to attorney's fees in a civil action based on the violation. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/20/2017 - Referred to Committee House Civil Justice |
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| **HB276** | **THREATENING UTILITY WORKERS** (REZABEK J, GREENSPAN D) To expand the offense of aggravated menacing to prohibit threatening a utility worker with intent to obstruct the operation of a utility. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/20/2017 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice |
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| **HB291** | **EMPLOYEE DISHONESTY INSURANCE** (WIGGAM S) To authorize counties, townships, and municipal corporations to purchase an employee dishonesty and faithful performance of duty insurance policy, instead of a bond, for protection from loss due to the fraudulent or dishonest actions of, and the failure to perform a duty prescribed by law by, an officer, official, employee, or appointee for which a bond is required by law. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/26/2017 - Introduced |
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| **HB303** | **SERVICE ANIMAL USE** (LIPPS S, KELLY B) To prohibit places of public accommodation from preventing the use of a service animal. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/5/2017 - Introduced |
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| **HB312** | **LOCAL GOVERNMENT CREDIT CARDS** (SCHURING K, GREENSPAN D) Regarding use of credit cards and debit cards by political subdivisions. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/26/2017 - Introduced |
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| **SB2** | **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS LAWS** (HITE C) To revise specified laws relating to environmental protection. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/7/2017 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. 90 days |
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| **SB3** | **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** (BEAGLE B, BALDERSON T) To revise the laws governing the state's workforce development system, programs that may be offered by primary and secondary schools, certificates of qualification for employment, and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency, and to designate the first week of May as In-Demand Jobs Week. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/21/2017 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Higher Education and Workforce Development, (Third Hearing) |
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| **SB31** | **HEALTH RULE WITHDRAW PROCESS** (EKLUND J) To authorize a board of county commissioners or municipal legislative authority to elect to withdraw the county or municipal corporation from the application of any rule adopted by the Department of Health after January 1, 2014, that governs the design of household sewage treatment systems. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/1/2017 - Senate Energy and Natural Resources, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB51** | **LAKE ERIE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT** (SKINDELL M, EKLUND J) To authorize the creation of a special improvement district to facilitate Lake Erie shoreline improvement. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/29/2017 - Senate Energy and Natural Resources, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB72** | **PREVAILING WAGE LAW** (HUFFMAN M) To allow political subdivisions, special districts, and state institutions of higher education to elect to apply the Prevailing Wage Law to public improvement projects. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/7/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |
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| **SB79** | **STATE DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW SCHEDULE** (JORDAN K) To require standing committees of the General Assembly to establish a schedule for the periodic review and sunset of state departments that are currently in the Governor's cabinet, and to require that Auditor of State performance audits be scheduled to coincide with the periodic review. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/28/2017 - **PASSED BY SENATE**; Vote 24-9 |
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| **SB88** | **SUBDIVISION COMMISSIONS-FISCAL EMERGENCY** (TERHAR L) To modify the composition and powers of the financial planning and supervision commission of a political subdivision that is in a state of fiscal emergency and to clarify the duties of that political subdivision. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/9/2017 - Referred to Committee House Government Accountability and Oversight |
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| **SB95** | **STATE PROJECTS-PIPING MATERIALS** (TERHAR L) To require a public authority to consider all piping materials that meet the engineering specifications for a state-funded water or waste water project. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/5/2017 - Senate Energy and Natural Resources, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB157** | **PUBLIC UTILITY RESELLING REGULATION** (BACON K) To regulate the reselling of public utility service. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/28/2017 - **BILL AMENDED**, Senate Public Utilities, (Fourth Hearing) |
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| **SB168** | **MEDICAID EXPANSION** (JORDAN K) To prohibit the Medicaid program from covering the expansion eligibility group and to require aggregate General Revenue Fund appropriations for state agencies to be reduced by specified amounts for the biennium beginning July 1, 2017, and ending on June 30, 2019. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/28/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |
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| **SJR4** | **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUNDING** (SCHIAVONI J) Proposing to enact Section 2t of Article VIII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to permit the issuance of general obligation bonds to fund sewer and water capital improvements. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/7/2017 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |