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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  **CORD**  Legislative Activities Report  **October 2021** |

A bill designed to protect property owners from being forced to shoulder the burden of municipal utility bills, including water bills, received its first hearing in the House State and Local Government Committee. HB 422, introduced by Rep. Mark Fraizer (R-Newark) and Rep. Thomas West (D-Canton), is being pushed by real estate investors who claim they are being held responsible for unpaid bills left by their tenants. The bill also creates a billing appeals board within the Ohio EPA, which would hear appeals from property owners in cases where the tenant is financially responsible for unpaid services. Rep. Fraizer said, “The circumstances have been well defined in the legislation to ensure individuals who have contracted for service are held responsible for any unpaid debts.”

HB 385 received its first hearing in the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee. The measure, sponsored by Rep. Jon Cross (R-Kenton), was introduced after it was discovered that the City of Maumee had illegally dumped sewage for nearly 20 years. The bill would establish fines on municipal systems in the Western Basin that discharge raw sewage into waterways. The bill would also pull NPDES permits from systems, which the sponsor said isn’t feasible and should be removed from the bill. The sponsor said that with all the federal money coming to Ohio, now is the time for communities to be prepared to use those funds to improve water and sewer systems. During the bill’s hearing, Rep. Michael Sheehy (D-Oregon) said he was unhappy with the news coming from Maumee, but said that the bill appears to be blaming cities for Lake Erie’s nutrient issues, when the problem stems from the agricultural industry. Rep. Cross pushed back saying, “I’ll stop blaming cities if you stop blaming farmers.”

The Ohio Redistricting Commission, which is charged with redrawing Ohio’s district maps for the Ohio House and Senate, were under a tight timeline to adopt the new maps prior to a September 15th Constitutional deadline. The panel had a late start in developing the maps, as the census data, which is used to determine population shifts, was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The seven-member, bipartisan panel voted along party lines to adopt the maps, meaning that they will only take effect for four years. If the panel would have been able to strike a deal with bipartisan support, the maps would have remained in effect for 10 years. The GOP redistricting plan is expected to result in supermajorities for the Republicans in both chambers, with 62 of the 99 districts favoring Republicans in the House and 23 of 33 districts leaning Republican in the Senate. The two Democrats on the panel, Sen. Vernon Sykes (D-Akron) and House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes (D-Akron) voted against the measure calling it a clear attempt at gerrymandering. The Commission could be called back should the Ohio Supreme Court rule in favor of one or more legal challenges to the maps (currently three legal challenges have been filed). Redrawing Ohio’s congressional districts is a separate process that is supposed to be handled within the Ohio General Assembly. Legislators, however, missed the September 30th deadline, which means the job will fall to the Redistricting Commission, which has until October 31st to adopt a map.

Governor DeWine recently announced that Ohio has initiated the repayment of approximately $1.5 billion in federal unemployment loan debt, which was borrowed to pay unemployment benefits to Ohioans during the pandemic. The repayment ensures employers will not see increases in premium payments. Had the loan not been fully paid by September 6th, the federal government would have charged interest on the debt, which would have led to increases in unemployment taxes for Ohio employers. The state is using federal ARPA funding to repay the loan. The Ohio General Assembly included the repayment provision in HB 168, which was passed and signed into law in June. The Ohio Chamber of Commerce estimates that the action will save businesses an estimated $650 million in increased payments over the next three years.

After months of debate about the issue of mandatory COVID vaccinations that prompted half a dozen competing proposals, House Republican leadership introduced a bill (HB 435) after a single hearing. The process upset Democrats, who voiced concerns about the bill moving so quickly without opportunities for the public to comment and little time for stakeholders to read the bill. The bill was quickly scheduled for a floor vote, but was then re-referred to the House Rules and Reference Committee after GOP members refused to coalesce around it. Speaker Cupp said, “There are a few additional issues our members would like more time to explore.”

Below is a list of legislation we are currently tracking during the 134th Ohio General Assembly:

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| **HB13** | **MODIFY THE CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW** (GRENDELL D, FRAIZER M) To modify the campaign finance law and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/15/2021 - House Government Oversight, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB20** | **PROHIBIT FORECLOSURES, EVICTION DURING COVID-19** (LELAND D, CROSSMAN J) To prohibit foreclosure activity and the eviction of residential and commercial tenants during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19, to refer such proceedings caused by the state of emergency to mediation, and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/23/2021 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB43** | **PUBLIC BODIES - ELECTRONIC MEETINGS** (SOBECKI L, HOOPS J) To authorize public bodies to meet via teleconference and video conference. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/11/2021 - House Government Oversight, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB63** | **AMEND EMINENT DOMAIN LAWS** (CUTRONA A, STOLTZFUS R) To amend the law regarding eminent domain and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/2/2021 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB90** | **OVERSIGHT OF GOVERNOR'S AND HEALTH ORDERS** (WIGGAM S, EDWARDS J) To establish legislative oversight of the Governor's executive orders, certain public health orders, and emergency rules, including by establishing the Ohio Health Oversight and Advisory Committee. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/24/2021 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB91** | **AUTHORIZE CERTAIN PUBLIC-PRIVATE INITIATIVES** (PATTON T) To authorize certain public entities to enter into public-private initiatives with a private party through a public-private agreement regarding public facilities. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/29/2021 - House Infrastructure and Rural Development, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB103** | **REGARDS ADOPTION/DURATION EMERGENCY RULES** (MERRIN D) Regarding the adoption and duration of emergency administrative rules. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/24/2021 - House State and Local Government, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB110** | **OPERATING BUDGET** (OELSLAGER S) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2023, to levy taxes, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 7/1/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; effective 7/1/21 |
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| **HB146** | **REGARDS APPLYING PREVAILING WAGE LAW TO PUBLIC PROJECTS** (RIEDEL C, MANCHESTER S) 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:*** | 6/23/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB158** | **PROHIBIT USE OF CERTAIN FIREFIGHTING FOAM FOR TESTING/TRAINING** (BALDRIDGE B) To prohibit the use of class B firefighting foam containing intentionally added PFAS chemicals for testing and training purposes. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/14/2021 - Senate Veterans and Public Safety, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB167** | **PROVIDE RENT, UTILITY ASSISTANCE** (OELSLAGER S) To provide rent and utility assistance and to make an appropriation. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/11/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. immediately |
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| **HB168** | **UNEMPLOYMENT DEBT** (FRAIZER M) To remit funds from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund to repay unemployment advances, to provide funds to support improvements at pediatric behavioral health care facilities, to require the Development Services Agency to establish the Water and Sewer Quality Program, and to make appropriations. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/29/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. immediately |
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| **HB175** | **DEREGULATE CERTAIN EPHEMERAL WATER FEATURES** (HILLYER B) To deregulate certain ephemeral water features under various water pollution control laws. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/29/2021 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Vote 61-33 |
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| **HB177** | **ALLOW GOVERNMENTS TO USE BLOCKCHAIN** (CARFAGNA R, FRAIZER M) To allow a governmental entity to utilize distributed ledger technology, including blockchain technology. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - Senate Financial Institutions and Technology, (Second Hearing) |
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| **HB202** | **VOID ORDERS REQUIRING FACIAL COVERINGS** (POWELL J) To void the order of the Interim Director of Health requiring the use of facial coverings throughout the state and prohibit the Governor or other administrative department heads from requiring the use of facial coverings without approval by the General Assembly. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/22/2021 - House Government Oversight, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB203** | **REQUIRE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE IF EXPERIENCED IN OTHER STATE** (POWELL J) To require an occupational licensing authority to issue a license or government certification to an applicant who holds a license, government certification, or private certification or has satisfactory work experience in another state under certain circumstances and to amend the version of section 3319.22 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on April 12, 2023, to continue the changes on and after that date. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/9/2021 - **BILL AMENDED**, House State and Local Government, (Third Hearing) |
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| **HB232** | **OHIO EQUAL PAY ACT** (HOWSE S, MIRANDA J) To enact the Ohio Equal Pay Act to address wage disparities in public and private employment. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/22/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB245** | **EXPAND ELIGIBILITY - COUNTY SEWER DISCOUNTED RATES** (INGRAM C) To expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates or charges. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/14/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government |
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| **HB247** | **REVISE PLUMBING INSPECTION LAW** (WEST T, KELLY B) To amend the law related to plumbing inspections. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/26/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Health |
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| **HB267** | **LIMIT PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS** (JORDAN K) To limit the duration of public health orders and to allow the General Assembly to act via concurrent resolution in response to a public health emergency if the Governor or Department of Health does not. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/4/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government |
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| **HB269** | **REPEAL SB22** (GALONSKI T) To repeal the version of Section 3 of S.B. 22 of the 134th General Assembly scheduled to take effect on June 23, 2021, to repeal the changes made by S.B. 22 of the 134th General Assembly to the laws governing legislative oversight of certain orders and rules issued by the executive branch, including the establishment of the Ohio Health Oversight and Advisory Committee, and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/4/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government |
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| **HB275** | **EXPAND POLITICAL SUBDIVISION JOINT PURCHASING AUTHORITY** (LAMPTON B) To expand political subdivision joint purchasing authority to expressly include purchases for construction services. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/12/2021 - House Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB299** | **CONSUMER UTILITY BILLING TRANSPARENCY ACT** (SKINDELL M) To enact "The Consumer Utility Billing Transparency Act" requiring the itemization of all riders, charges, taxes, and other costs on certain utility bills. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/19/2021 - House Public Utilities, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB309** | **FAIR, OPEN COMPETITION ACT** (BRINKMAN T) To enact the Fair and Open Competition Act regarding project labor agreements in public improvement contracts. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/18/2021 - Referred to Committee House Commerce and Labor |
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| **HB350** | **PROHIBIT MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINE** (CUTRONA A) To prohibit mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations, requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination, and certain other actions relating to an individual's COVID-19 vaccination or health status and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/22/2021 - House Civil Justice, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB364** | **WATERWORKS INFRASTRUCTURE APPLICATION** (PATTON T) To make changes to the application process for the waterworks infrastructure improvement surcharge. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/16/2021 - Referred to Committee House Public Utilities |
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| **HB365** | **DRINKING WATER SAFETY RULES** (LIGHTBODY M, RUSSO A) To require the Director of Environmental Protection to adopt rules establishing maximum allowable contaminant levels in drinking water and water quality standards for certain contaminants. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/16/2021 - Referred to Committee House Agriculture and Conservation |
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| **HB376** | **OHIO PERSONAL PRIVACY ACT** (CARFAGNA R, HALL T) To enact the Ohio Personal Privacy Act. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - House Government Oversight, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB385** | **PROHIBIT DISCHARGE OF WASTE INTO OHIO WATERS** (CROSS J) To prohibit a municipal corporation located within the Western Basin of Lake Erie from discharging any amount of waste into Ohio waters. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - House Agriculture and Conservation, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB388** | **REGARDING VACCINE REFUSAL** (JORDAN K) To prohibit taking certain actions against an individual because the individual refuses to be vaccinated against a disease. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 8/12/2021 - Introduced |
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| **HB401** | **EMPLOYER-MANDATED COVID VACCINATION INJURY** (EDWARDS J) To exempt an injury or disability caused by an employer-mandated COVID-19 vaccination from the Workers' Compensation Law and to allow the employee to sue the employer for damages. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 8/24/2021 - Introduced |
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| **HB411** | **INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY, ANTI-DISCRIMINATION ACT** (CLICK G, GRENDELL D) To prohibit mandatory disclosures related to an individual's COVID-19 vaccination status, to name the act the Individual Privacy and Anti-Discrimination Act, and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/8/2021 - Introduced |
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| **HB422** | **BILLING - MUNICIPAL SERVICES** (FRAIZER M, WEST T) To limit the amount municipal corporations can recover from property owners of non-owner-occupied properties for unpaid municipal utility and other service rates and charges and to create an appeals process for improper billing of municipal services. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/29/2021 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing) |
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| **HB424** | **COVID-19 VACCINE - QUALIFIED IMMUNITIES** (KOEHLER K) To prohibit a political subdivision, public official, public school, state agency, or state institution of higher education from taking certain actions related to the COVID-19 vaccine, to codify the qualified civil immunities under H.B. 606 of the 133rd General Assembly permanently, to repeal section 3792.05 of the Revised Code on the date that is two years after the effective date of that section, and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/20/2021 - Introduced |
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| **HB435** | **VACCINE REQUIREMENTS** (CARFAGNA R, SEITZ B) To address COVID-19 vaccine requirements for employees and students; to extend certain timelines for qualified civil immunity and expand immunity to include hearing aid dealers and hearing aid fitters; to authorize emergency medical technicians to administer COVID-19 tests; to expressly cover COVID-19 vaccine injuries under the workers' compensation system; and to repeal sections 3792.05, 3792.06, 3792.07, and 3792.08 of the Revised Code on June 30, 2023. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/29/2021 - Re-Referred to Committee |
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| **HR19** | **URGE CONGRESS TO CREATE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE BANK** (SOBECKI L, STEPHENS J) To urge the United States Congress to create a National Infrastructure Bank to finance urgently needed infrastructure projects. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/24/2021 - House Infrastructure and Rural Development, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB9** | **REDUCE REGULATIONS** (MCCOLLEY R, ROEGNER K) To require certain agencies to reduce the number of regulatory restrictions in their administrative rules. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - House Government Oversight, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB15** | **FISCAL OFFICERS-LIABILITY** (WILSON S) To change the circumstances in which certain fiscal officers may be held liable for a loss of public funds. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government |
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| **SB19** | **REGARDING PROPERTY TAXATION** (SCHAFFER T) To modify the law regarding property taxation and sales and use tax. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/28/2021 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Amended on Floor, Bill Vote 61-36 |
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| **SB22** | **LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT-PUBLIC HEALTH ORDERS** (JOHNSON T, MCCOLLEY R) To establish legislative oversight of orders issued by the executive branch, including by establishing the Ohio Health Oversight and Advisory Committee. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/24/2021 - Consideration of Governor's Veto; House Overrides Veto, Vote 62-35 |
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| **SB27** | **AUTOMATIC ENROLLMENT-DEFERRED COMPENSATION** (HOTTINGER J) To authorize automatic enrollment of new state government employees in the Ohio Public Employees Deferred Compensation Program. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/8/2021 - **SIGNED BY GOVERNOR**; eff. 9/7/21 |
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| **SB39** | **COOPER'S LAW - CRIMES & RECORD RETENTION** (SCHAFFER T) To eliminate the 20-year statute of limitation for felonious assault and aggravated assault if the victim is a peace officer, to modify the law regarding records retention schedules developed by counties, municipal corporations, and townships, to modify the penalties for aggravated assault, tampering with evidence, falsification, and falsification in a theft offense, and to name this act Cooper's Law. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/21/2021 - Senate Judiciary, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB56** | **INDEMNITY-DESIGN CONTRACTS** (BLESSING III L) To regulate the use of indemnity provisions in professional design contracts related to public improvements. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB78** | **JUNETEENTH-LEGAL HOLIDAY** (CRAIG H, BRENNER A) To establish the nineteenth of June as Juneteenth, a legal holiday for which government employees receive paid leave. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 2/24/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Government Oversight and Reform |
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| **SB83** | **BROWNFIELDS** (WILLIAMS S, RULLI M) To require the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study to determine where brownfield sites are located in this state and to make an appropriation. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 9/28/2021 - House Agriculture and Conservation, (Third Hearing) |
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| **SB84** | **CLEAN OHIO REVITALIZATION FUND** (WILLIAMS S, RULLI M) To make changes to the law relating to the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/23/2021 - Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB95** | **REGULATE UTILITY RESELLERS** (MAHARATH T) To require refunds to utility customers who have been improperly charged and to regulate certain resellers of utility service. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/31/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB96** | **PREVENT UTILITY DISTRUPTION-COVID** (WILLIAMS S) To prevent the disruption of utility service during the state of emergency declared regarding COVID-19 and to declare an emergency. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/31/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB105** | **MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISES** (SYKES V, SCHURING K) To require political subdivisions to recognize state certifications of minority business enterprises. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/10/2021 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Workforce Development |
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| **SB110** | **RENT, UTILITY ASSISTANCE** (O'BRIEN S, WILSON S) To provide rent and utility assistance and to make an appropriation. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 3/24/2021 - Referred to Committee House Finance |
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| **SB111** | **VACCINATIONS, CORONAVIRUS RECOVERY INCLUDING TOWNSHIPS** (BLESSING III L, BRENNER A) To prohibit certain mandatory vaccinations and other activities related to an individual's vaccination status and to make an appropriation related to coronavirus local fiscal recovery. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/24/2021 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Amended on Floor, Bill Vote 62-34 |
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| **SB131** | **LICENSURE RECIPROCITY** (ROEGNER K, MCCOLLEY R) To require an occupational licensing authority to issue a license or government certification to an applicant who holds a license, government certification, or private certification or has satisfactory work experience in another state under certain circumstances and to amend the version of section 3319.22 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on April 12, 2023, to continue the changes on and after that date. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/26/2021 - Senate Workforce and Higher Education, (Second Hearing) |
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| **SB143** | **ADOPT MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL-ALUMINUM** (O'BRIEN S) To require the Director of Environmental Protection to adopt a maximum contaminant level for aluminum in drinking water. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/15/2021 - Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources, (Third Hearing) |
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| **SB152** | **FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE TASK FORCE** (HOAGLAND F) To establish the Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Task Force in the office of the Attorney General and to make an appropriation. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/21/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |
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| **SB175** | **LABOR AGREEMENTS-PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS** (LANG G) To enact the Fair and Open Competition Act regarding project labor agreements in public improvement contracts. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 5/5/2021 - Introduced |
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| **SB180** | **EXPANDED DISCOUNTED SEWER RATES** (THOMAS C) To expand eligibility for county sewer discounted rates or charges. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/8/2021 - Senate Energy and Public Utilities, (First Hearing) |
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| **SB193** | **UNPAID WATER CHARGES** (WILLIAMS S) To prohibit political subdivisions from placing a lien on property for unpaid water charges. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 6/2/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Energy and Public Utilities |
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| **SJR2** | **PERMIT BONDS-CLEAN WATER IMPROVEMENTS** (GAVARONE T, YUKO K) 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 clean water improvements. | |
|  | ***Current Status:*** | 4/21/2021 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance |