



NAWBO LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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- HB38** **COMMERCIAL CREDIT REPORTING** (HILLYER B) To require a commercial credit reporting agency to provide credit reports to businesses and to establish a procedure whereby a business may dispute statements on the report.
Current Status: 2/20/2020 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Vote 91-1
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-38>
- HB75** **PROPERTY VALUE CONTESTS** (MERRIN D) To require local governments that contest property values to formally pass an authorizing resolution for each contest and to notify property owners.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-75>
- HB81** **WORKERS COMP-BODILY FLUID EXPOSURE** (PERALES R) Regarding Workers' Compensation coverage of post-exposure medical diagnostic services for a detention facility employee's exposure to another person's blood or bodily fluids.
Current Status: 2/26/2020 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-81>
- HB91** **FAMILY-MEDICAL LEAVE** (BOGGS K, BOYD J) To establish family and medical leave insurance benefits.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - House Insurance, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-91>
- HB137** **EMPLOYEE EARNINGS AND DEDUCTIONS** (KELLY B, VITALE N) To require an employer to provide earnings and deductions statements to each of the employer's employees.
Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-137>

- HB197** **TAX CODE CORRECTIONS** (POWELL J, MERRIN D) To enact the "Tax Code Streamlining and Correction Act" to make technical and corrective changes to the laws governing taxation.
Current Status: 2/25/2020 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, Senate Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-197>
- HB238** **WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS** (CERA J, SCHERER G) To revise Ohio's whistleblower protection laws.
Current Status: 2/26/2020 - **REPORTED OUT**, House Civil Justice, (Sixth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-238>
- HB242** **CONTAINER USE RESTRICTIONS** (LANG G, JONES D) To authorize the use of an auxiliary container for any purpose, to prohibit the imposition of a tax or fee on those containers, and to apply existing anti-littering law to those containers.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-242>
- HB251** **CONTRACT ACTION-PERIOD OF LIMITATION** (LANG G, HILLYER B) To shorten the period of limitations for actions upon a contract.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Senate Judiciary, (Third Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-251>
- HB263** **OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING-CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS** (KOEHLER K) To revise the initial occupational licensing restrictions applicable to individuals convicted of criminal offenses.
Current Status: 2/5/2020 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House Commerce and Labor, (Fifth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-263>
- HB308** **PTSD COVERAGE - FIRST RESPONDERS** (PATTON T) Concerning workers' compensation and disability retirement for peace officers, firefighters, and emergency medical workers diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder arising from employment without an accompanying physical injury.
Current Status: 2/26/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate General Government and Agency Review
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-308>
- HB368** **COMPUTER CRIMES** (BALDRIDGE B) To enact the Ohio Computer Crimes Act.
Current Status: 2/20/2020 - **REPORTED OUT**, House Criminal Justice, (Fifth Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-368>

HB369 **SEXUAL, GENDER DISCRIMINATION** (HILLYER B, SKINDELL M) To enact the Ohio Fairness Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, to add mediation as an informal method that the Ohio Civil Rights Commission may use, and to uphold existing religious exemptions under Ohio's Civil Rights Law.

Current Status: 2/4/2020 - House Civil Justice, (Second Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-369>

HB380 **CONTRACTOR PAYMENT DEADLINE** (CROSS J, SWEENEY B) To require owners of construction projects to pay a contractor within thirty-five days of receiving a request for payment.

Current Status: 2/5/2020 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Commerce and Labor, (Third Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-380>

HB387 **CAP INSULIN COST-SHARING** (LISTON B, BOGGS K) To cap cost-sharing for prescription insulin drugs.

Current Status: 2/18/2020 - House Health, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-387>

HB402 **INTERIOR DESIGN EXAMINERS BOARD** (LANG G, SWEENEY B) To create the Ohio Interior Design Examiners Board to certify and regulate interior designers.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-402>

HB442 **PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT CERTIFICATE** (ROEMER B, WEST T) To modify the requirements to obtain a certified public accountant certificate.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - House Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-442>

HB467 **PASS-THROUGH ENTITY TAX REDUCTION** (SCHERER G) To reduce the pass-through entity withholding tax rate to four percent.

Current Status: 2/19/2020 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-467>

HB469 **HEALTH INSURANCE COST-SHARING** (MANCHESTER S, WEST T) To prohibit certain health insurance cost-sharing practices.

Current Status: 2/18/2020 - House Health, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-469>

- HB508 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS** (CERA J, SWEENEY B) To allow an individual to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits for unemployment due to domestic violence.
Current Status: 2/19/2020 - Referred to Committee House Criminal Justice
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-508>
- HB523 STEM DEGREE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM** (PATTERSON J, CARFAGNA R) to establish the STEM Degree Loan Repayment Program, to authorize a refundable tax credit for employers who make payments on student loans obtained by a graduate to earn a STEM degree, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 2/21/2020 - Introduced
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-523>
- HB531 JOBSOHIO AUDITS** (ROGERS J) To establish that JobsOhio must submit to audits by the Auditor of State, and that an audit of JobsOhio must include an audit of the revenues, receipts, and expenditures of JobsOhio associated with the enterprise acquisition project.
Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-531>
- HB533 WOMEN'S POLICY, RESEARCH COMMISSION** (SYKES E) To create the Women's Policy and Research Commission and the Women's Policy and Research Center, to specify their powers and duties, and to make an appropriation.
Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Finance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-533>
- HB534 IDENTIFYING INFORMATION - COMPENSATION CLAIMS** (UPCHURCH T, CRAWLEY E) Regarding identifying information in the medical management of workers' compensation claims.
Current Status: 3/10/2020 - Referred to Committee House Insurance
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-534>
- HB540 VOTER REGISTRATION, VERIFICATION SYSTEM** (MANNING G) To create an automated voter registration and verification system.
Current Status: 3/11/2020 - House State and Local Government, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-HB-540>
- SB39 MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS-TAX CREDIT** (SCHURING K) To authorize an insurance premiums tax credit for capital contributions to transformational mixed use development projects.
Current Status: 2/12/2020 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Economic and Workforce Development, (Seventh Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-39>

SB70 **PROHIBIT FELONY QUESTION-JOB APPLICATIONS** (WILLIAMS S) To prohibit private employers from including on an employment application any question concerning whether an applicant has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a felony.

Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-70>

SB75 **PROHIBIT NONCOMPETE PROVISIONS-BROADCASTING** (WILLIAMS S) To prohibit the use of noncompete provisions in employment contracts in the broadcasting industry.

Current Status: 2/5/2020 - Senate Transportation, Commerce and Workforce, (First Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-75>

SB89 **CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION -- EDCHOICE** (HUFFMAN M) With regard to career-technical education and the compensation of joint vocational school districts located in enterprise zones, to make changes regarding STEM school report cards, to prohibit the use of value-added data for evaluations of careertechnical educators, to revise the law on community school fiscal officer liability, to make changes regarding school financing studies by the Department of Education, to revise the eligibility and operation of the Educational Choice Scholarship program, to dissolve existing academic distress commissions, to place a moratorium on the creation of academic distress commissions, to establish the School Transformation Board, to rename the income-based expansion of the Educational Choice Scholarship program as the Buckeye Opportunity Scholarship program, and to declare an emergency.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Consideration of House Amendments; Emergency Clause 7-24, Senate Does Not Concur

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

SB136 **REGISTERED DESIGN PROFESSIONALS** (HOTTINGER J, SYKES V) To establish a payment assurance program for registered design professionals.

Current Status: 2/25/2020 - Senate Government Oversight and Reform, (Third Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-136>

SB156 **DRUG SCREENINGS** (GAVARONE T) To prohibit defrauding an alcohol, drug, or urine screening test.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - **PASSED BY SENATE**; Vote 31-0

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-156>

SB159 **TAX CREDITS-BEGINNING FARMERS** (PETERSON B) To allow income tax credits for beginning farmers who participate in a financial management program and for businesses that sell or rent agricultural land, livestock, facilities, or equipment to beginning farmers.

Current Status: 3/3/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-159>

SB219 **APPRENTICE PROGRAM** (WILLIAMS S) To establish a career pathways apprentice program.

Current Status: 2/11/2020 - Senate Education, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-219>

SB246 **OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING** (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.

Current Status: 2/19/2020 - Senate General Government and Agency Review , (Fifth Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-246>

SB257 **ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING STATIONS** (O'BRIEN S, RULLI M) To authorize tax incentives for the purchase of plug-in electric motor vehicles and charging stations.

Current Status: 2/11/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-257>

SB264 **TAX CREDIT-EDUCATION LOANS** (WILLIAMS S) To authorize a nonrefundable tax credit for a business that assists an employee with the repayment of education loans.

Current Status: 3/3/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-264>

SB274 **CREATE LIQUOR PERMIT** (WILLIAMS S) To create the F-11 liquor permit, which authorizes specified entities to sell beer and wine at special functions, including social and benevolent functions.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-274>

SB276 **LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANIES** (ROEGNER K) To enact the Ohio Revised Limited Liability Company Act.

Current Status: 2/12/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Judiciary
State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-276>

SB282 **UNEMPLOYMENT COMP COMPLAINTS** (HOAGLAND F) To require the Director of Job and Family Services to establish a process for employers to make complaints regarding unemployment compensation benefits.

Current Status: 3/4/2020 - Referred to Committee Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SB-282>

SJR3 REQUIRE SUPERMAJORITY-INCOME TAX INCREASE (BURKE D) Proposing to enact Section 7 of Article XII of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to require that any increase in income tax rates be approved by a supermajority of the membership of each house of the General Assembly.

Current Status: 3/3/2020 - Senate Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)

State Bill Page: <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA133-SJR-3>

IN THE NEWS:

CORONAVIRUS

Ohio leaders confirmed the first cases of the coronavirus strain known as COVID-19 in the state and escalated the official response to the virus' spread over the week, eventually getting to the point of ordering schools to close and barring most gatherings of 100 or more people. The Ohio Department of Health is posting daily updates on confirmed and suspected cases and test results at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov and has established a call center hotline at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634), which is available from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. Gov. Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director (ODH) Amy Acton held daily press conferences over the week. On Saturday, they announced ODH's capability to perform virus testing on its own and plans for hospitals and private labs to complement that capability in the days that followed. On Monday, they confirmed the first three cases -- a couple who'd been on a Nile River cruise and a man who'd attended the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) conference in Washington, D.C. That prompted DeWine also to declare an official state of emergency. On Wednesday, the administration confirmed the state's first case of "community spread" to a 53-year-old Stark County man with no history of travel outside the U.S. and no known contact with someone who had the virus. On Thursday, ODH confirmed a fifth case and said at the time that 52 people were under investigation for suspected cases, while 30 had seen negative test results for the virus. DeWine also issued protocols to limit visiting at nursing facilities and orders to restrict mass gatherings and close school buildings for three weeks, the latter beginning at the end of the school day on Monday, March 16. The mass gatherings order includes exceptions for religious gatherings and other activities protected by the First Amendment, and is not meant to apply to stores, restaurants and transportation hubs. He telegraphed the mass gatherings order a day ahead of time, encouraging professional sports teams and others to take steps on their own, and many followed by barring spectators from games and then cancelling tournaments and suspending and/or delaying seasons. The governor also urged all Ohio college and universities to move to online classes only, something many institutions announced plans to do over the week.

Numerous government agencies cancelled or drastically scaled back planned meetings and events. The Bureau of Workers' Compensation cancelled its Board of Directors meeting and the annual Safety Congress & Expo, which was set to bring thousands of people to Columbus but

instead offered some online-only sessions. The Statehouse suspended guided tours, and the Ohio Democratic Party postponed its Legacy Dinner, among other cancellations.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and Superintendent Paolo DeMaria said state leaders are in talks about waivers for testing requirements, report cards, attendance reporting and the like should the virus start to prompt school closings. They also encouraged schools to stay in contact with local health and emergency planning officials, and to cancel any large gatherings. ODE has an FAQ for school-related coronavirus concerns at its website, www.education.ohio.gov.

Lawmakers and staff in the Ohio General Assembly took precautions after staff were potentially exposed to the virus at out-of-town conferences. An intern in the Senate self-quarantined after attending the AIPAC conference, and House staff who attended the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) stayed home from work as well.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) said it would grant waivers to rules for free and reduced-price school meals amid the outbreak -- specifically the requirement that meals be served in a group setting -- to help ensure students can access meals should schools close.

Democratic presidential candidates Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders cancelled planned rallies in Cleveland Tuesday as a precaution against further spread of the coronavirus.

Swiftly passing federal paid sick leave legislation is one of the most important actions the government could take to blunt the spread of novel coronavirus, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) told reporters in a call Wednesday. Brown introduced a bill on that as part of a broader package put forward by Senate Democrats, saying all are at risk when those without paid sick leave have to work while ill to avoid going without pay. U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles) introduced similar legislation in the U.S. House Wednesday as well, and Brown said he expected that would be passed by the House in the coming days.

Speaking to the press and general public over Facebook Live Thursday, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost discussed how local governments can change practices due to coronavirus and called on Ohioans not to buy excessive quantities of products such as toilet paper or hand sanitizer.

In a video message to schools Thursday, Superintendent Paolo DeMaria sought to reassure them that state leaders are prepared to waive testing and other requirements and that it's safe for schools to host polling locations in next week's March 17 primary election.

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) followed Monday's executive order declaring a state of emergency from the coronavirus with a six-page order of its own Thursday urging regulated utilities to reexamine their policies and billing charges and seek needed approval from the state to prevent service disconnections at homes and offices and to head off infection from "social contact" with consumers.

Policy Matters Ohio (PMO) said Thursday that "workers, employers and policymakers" all have steps they can take to ensure the unemployment compensation (UC) system provides the maximum support possible. "Ohio's unemployment compensation system is an essential support,

especially when the economy turns down," PMO Research Director Zach Schiller said in a release. "Steps should be taken to bolster it so it can help a larger share of the unemployed, including those who are able and willing to work but unable to do so because of coronavirus's effect on the economy."

Ohio State University (OSU) announced Thursday that it would continue with virtual instruction for the remainder of the spring semester after previously cancelling in-person classes until March 30.

The Ohio Republican Party Thursday said it will stop participation in any public, face-to-face events due to concern over the coronavirus until April 12, including a Summit County Lincoln Day Dinner that was to feature Vice President Mike Pence.

EDUCATION

A new collaborative pilot project will use \$1 million in existing funds over the next two years to expand broadband access, allowing students in Monroe County's rural Switzerland School District to talk with mental health counselors via videoconferencing known as telehealth. Developed as a partnership between InnovateOhio, Ohio Children's Initiatives, the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) and the newly announced BroadbandOhio, the project is part of the state's broadband strategy to expand access to the approximately one million Ohioans without high-speed Internet.

The State Board of Education postponed its planned vote on updated operating standards for Ohio schools Tuesday following member questions and objections to changes from representatives of private schools. The operating standards, which set minimum expectations for schools on topics from basic health and safety to staffing to graduation and course requirements, are due for the five-year review mandated for all state administrative rules. During the public testimony portion of the board agenda, the Ohio Association of Independent Schools (OAIS) and Buckeye Christian Schools Organization (BCSO) expressed opposition to rule language approved by the board's Continuous Improvement Committee.

Ohio charter schools with for-profit management companies would have three years to switch to a nonprofit operator under House legislation announced Wednesday to cap what management companies are paid. The bill from Reps. Gayle Manning (R-North Ridgeville) and Jeff Crossman (D-Parma) also would subject charter schools to the same laws as district schools for state audits and open records. Leadership from Ohio teachers' unions joined the lawmakers Wednesday at a press conference to show support for the proposal.

ELECTIONS

Legislation that would create a more streamlined voter registration process began hearings in the House Wednesday, with Secretary of State Frank LaRose's office recommending that lawmakers give a longer implementation period on the legislation. HB540 (G. Manning) is similar to SB186 (Sykes-N. Manning), which is being heard in the Senate and already has received proponent testimony from LaRose himself last month. The sponsor of HB540, Rep. Gayle Manning (R-

North Ridgeville), told the House State and Local Government Committee Wednesday that the bill will allow Ohioans to register to vote or update the address on their voter registration when they go to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) to get or renew a driver's license or state identification card.

ELECTIONS 2020

A week before Ohio holds its primary election, a national Quinnipiac University Poll shows that the Democratic contest is essentially a two-person race. According to survey of 1,261 self-identified registered voters nationwide, 54 percent of Democrats and Independents who lean Democratic said they would like to see Joe Biden win the Democratic nomination, while 35 percent would like to see Bernie Sanders win.

EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) released January jobs numbers Friday showing the state's unemployment rate was 4.1 percent, down slightly from the 4.2 percent reported for December, though the state's non-agricultural wage and salary employment decreased 6,300 over the month from a revised 5,591,900 in December to 5,585,600 in January. Meanwhile, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released national unemployment numbers for February, showing the nation added 273,000 jobs over the month and that the unemployment rate dropped to 3.5 percent from 3.6 percent in January.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

The Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) Business Relations Program recently was named a 2020 Harvard Innovations in American Government award finalist by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University. According to a release from OOD, the innovations award has been given out for more than 30 years and recognizes public-sector programs that make American government more efficient and effective in addressing social problems and providing public services. This year, the award program specifically sought out models of government innovation promoting economic opportunity for all.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Gov. Mike DeWine recently announced nearly \$8 million in awards for Ohio's public colleges and universities as part of the Ohio Department of Higher Education's (ODHE) Regionally Aligned Priorities in Delivering Skills (RAPIDS) program. The program is meant to help public institutions purchase up-to-date equipment and increase students' job preparedness, according to a release from ODHE.

HOUSING/HOMELESSNESS

Housing advocates Tuesday urged state and federal policymakers to take more aggressive action to reduce the shortage of 256,875 rental units that are affordable and available to extremely low-

income Ohioans. According to a release, The Gap report, released jointly by the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition, reveals a severe lack of housing for people working in low-wage jobs. In Ohio, there are only 44 rental units affordable and available for every 100 extremely low-income households.

JUDICIAL

The Ohio Supreme Court will decide whether a municipal tax on vehicles for hire violates the state's authority to impose an annual fee on vehicles licensed in Ohio, or whether Put-In-Bay's annual \$50 levy on horse-driven cabs, pedi-cabs and similar modes of transportation is a legitimate exercise of its home rule power to tax business. Justices heard oral arguments in the case Tuesday.

The Ohio Board of Professional Conduct urges lawyers to advise clients on the inherent "risks" of pro se litigation as part of "limited scope" representation, in which attorneys provide some but not all services required by a specific legal matter. The conduct board has issued a new "Ethics Guide on Limited Scope Representation" following recommendations on "unbundled" legal services in the Ohio Supreme Court Task Force on Access to Justice's final report.

MARIJUANA/HEMP

A medical marijuana dispensary company accused of misleading regulators about its ownership structure will donate \$500,000 to the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS) as part of a settlement with the Ohio Board of Pharmacy (OBP), according to a copy of the agreement announced Friday.

TOBACCO/SMOKING

A recent report from the American Cancer Society rating all 50 states on their tobacco prevention and cessation efforts gave Ohio high marks for its smoke-free laws and expanded Medicaid coverage but said the state should spend more on tobacco use prevention.