

# NAIOP

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE  
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

NAIOP OF OHIO

**NAIOP Weekly Legislative Report**  
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## Supported Bills

- HB10**     **REMEDIATION OF CONTAMINATED SITE (SEARS, B)** To authorize refundable tax credits for the completion of a voluntary action to remediate a contaminated site and for the return of such sites to productive use, and to exempt persons through 2017 who have issued covenants not to sue under the Voluntary Action Program from certain fees and penalties for one year after the issuance of such a covenant.
- Current Status:* 3/2/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fifth Hearing)  
      *All Bill Status:* 2/23/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)  
                          2/16/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)  
                          2/9/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)  
                          2/2/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)  
                          1/26/2011 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
                          1/11/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
                          1/11/2011 - Introduced
- HB17**     **TAX CREDIT FOR HIRING UNEMPLOYED (BAKER, N)** To authorize a \$2,400 income tax withholding credit for an employer that hires and employs a previously unemployed individual.
- Current Status:* 1/11/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
      *All Bill Status:* 1/11/2011 - Introduced
- HB18**     **TAX CREDIT - EXPANDING BUSINESSES (BAKER, N)** To authorize a nonrefundable tax credit for a business that increases payroll and expands into a vacant facility.
- Current Status:* 2/23/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fifth Hearing)  
      *All Bill Status:* 2/16/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)  
                          2/9/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)  
                          2/2/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)  
                          1/26/2011 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
                          1/11/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
                          1/11/2011 - Introduced

## Oppose

- HB50**     **TYPE-II ANNEXATION (SNITCHLER T)** To require that a political subdivision owner be included in determining the number of owners needed to sign a petition for an expedited type-II annexation.
- Current Status:* 6/21/2011 - House Local Government, (Fifth Hearing)  
      *All Bill Status:* 6/14/2011 - **BILL AMENDED**, House Local Government, (Fifth

Hearing)  
5/24/2011 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, House Local Government, (Fourth Hearing)  
3/1/2011 - House Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
2/22/2011 - House Local Government, (Second Hearing)  
2/15/2011 - House Local Government, (First Hearing)  
2/1/2011 - Referred to Committee House Local Government  
1/26/2011 - Introduced

### Monitoring

- HB134 CAPITAL GAINS INVESTMENTS (SCHURING K)** To reduce the income tax rate on capital gains reinvested in Ohio-based investments.  
*Current Status:* 6/1/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fourth Hearing)  
*All Bill Status:* 5/11/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)  
3/30/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)  
3/23/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)  
3/16/2011 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
3/2/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
3/1/2011 - Introduced
- HB198 PROPERTY TAX COMPLAINTS (COLEY II W)** To permit property tax complaints to be initiated only by the property owner.  
*Current Status:* 5/12/2011 - House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development, (Second Hearing)  
*All Bill Status:* 5/4/2011 - House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development, (First Hearing)  
4/12/2011 - Referred to Committee House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development  
4/12/2011 - Introduced
- SB89 LABOR REQUIREMENTS (JORDAN K)** To prohibit state agencies from requiring or prohibiting certain labor requirements as a condition of performing public works and prohibit the appropriations of state funds for public works when political subdivisions require or prohibit certain labor.  
*Current Status:* 3/8/2011 - Referred to Committee Senate Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review  
*All Bill Status:* 2/23/2011 - Introduced
- SB115 PROPERTY SALE GAINS (KEARNEY E)** To exempt from income taxation any gains from the sale of Ohio property used in a trade or business and held for at least two years.  
*Current Status:* 3/24/2011 - Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (First Hearing)  
*All Bill Status:* 3/15/2011 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development  
3/9/2011 - Introduced

### Bills Introduced Since 8/8/2011

- HB306 BUILDING STANDARDS (PILLICH C)** To require a building or structure constructed using state capital budget moneys to adhere to certain energy efficiency and building standards

and to encourage the use of Ohio-produced products.

**HCR24 OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS (BATCHELDER W)** To delegate to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives authority to designate groups of members to prepare arguments for and against amendments to the Ohio Constitution proposed by the General Assembly, a person or persons to prepare an argument for any law, section, or item submitted to the electors by referendum petition, and a person or persons to prepare an argument against any constitutional amendment proposed by initiative petition.

## Week in Review

Friday, August 12, 2011

### AGRICULTURE

The Ohio State Fair ended its 12-day run Sunday with the annual Sale of Champions, which the Ohio Expositions Commission said brought \$316,000, of which \$236,000 will go to the Youth Reserve Program.

After reviewing and scoring landowners' applications for the tenth round of funding for the Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board has recommended 41 farms for funding to Ohio Agriculture Director Jim Zehringer. A total of \$6.4 million from the Clean Ohio Fund will be used to purchase agricultural easements on these farms to preserve them in perpetuity.

Ohio Agriculture Director James Zehringer announced Thursday that animal care rules developed by the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board will become effective Sept. 29.

### AUDITOR OF STATE

Auditor Dave Yost said a new Ohio Performance Team of 12 advisors will be conducting performance audits for his office under SB4 (Schaffer). He the creation of the Petro Fellowship, a partnership with Ohio State University to bring in four graduate students to help with the audits.

### BALLOT ISSUES

After Attorney General Mike DeWine rejected petition language for a partial challenge to election-law changes in HB194 (Mecklenborg-Blessing), Fair Elections Ohio filed a new round of signatures with a petition seeking a referendum on the entire law.

ProgressOhio and a coalition of other groups filed arguments in the Ohio Supreme Court on Aug. 5 challenging the validity of 69,000 signatures filed to put Issue 3, the health care constitutional amendment, on the November ballot. Early on Friday, Aug. 11, the Ohio Supreme Court rejected those arguments. Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted had opposed the challenge, saying ProgressOhio misinterpreted the law under which the challenge was filed.

We Are Ohio, the group seeking to repeal SB5 (Jones) via referendum, released a statement saying it isn't interest in any compromise that would take the referendum off the ballot, in answer to a *Columbus Dispatch* editorial calling for such a compromise.

### FY12-13 BUDGET

Preliminary financial data for July from the Office of Budget and Management showed state revenues 0.7 percent or \$16 million below estimates. Income tax collections were down 1.7 percent, while sales tax collections were 0.2 percent above estimates. The report was somewhat skewed by timing issues, as figures on  $\frac{1}{2}$ cigarette taxes and liquor profit transfers weren't available in time for the report because the last two days of the month fell on a weekend.

## **DISASTERS**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services will get a \$16.2 million National Emergency Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to create jobs and help the state recover from severe storms and flooding that occurred last spring in Southeastern Ohio, according to U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH).

## **EDUCATION**

Ohio is moving forward with a formal review of the federal exemption from No Child Left Behind announced Monday by the Obama administration, which said it has grown impatient with Congress's four-year delay on reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. State Superintendent Stan Heffner said Monday the Ohio Department of Education, which unlike several states has not previously sought a waiver, will closely follow "flexibility" options already signaled by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and their development over the next month.

Ohio ranks in the top 10 nationally for "dropout factories" and the top three for growth of failing high schools, reports the Gen. Colin Powell-led "Building a Grad Nation." Co-author and CEO John Bridgeland of Civic Enterprises Inc. told a Capitol Square crowd Wednesday that Ohio and other states can reverse that trend through the ten-year goals of a "Civic Marshall Plan" for America.

## **ELECTIONS**

The Libertarian Party of Ohio filed a federal lawsuit arguing that parts of HB194 (Mecklenborg-Blessing) unconstitutionally restricts ballot access for third parties and returns the state to petitioning requirements at levels the party already had successfully sued to overturn in 2006.

Ohioans want to convey that they "heart" voting on Election Day as they chose the new "I Voted Today" sticker.

Secretary of State Jon Husted announced the winning design in the contest his office held to choose the new voting sticker. The winner, which received 38 percent of the vote with 22,572 ballots, says "I heart voting" but swaps in the image of the state of Ohio for the heart.

The National Association of Secretaries of State President Beth Chapman of Alabama announced on Wednesday the appointment of Ohio Secretary of State John Husted as the committee co-chair of the group's Standing Committee on Elections.

## **ELECTIONS 2012**

Rep. Connie Pillich (D-Cincinnati) said she will run for Congress in 2012, though results of the redistricting process will determine whether she runs against U.S. Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-Loveland) or U.S. Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Cincinnati). Republicans are likely to make her current Ohio House district more difficult for a Democrat to win during redistricting.

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) is backing Treasurer Josh Mandel for U.S. Senate in 2012, Mandel's campaign committee announced Tuesday.

## **EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT**

After two straight months of bad news in the nation's economic picture, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics gave better news about July on Friday when it announced 117,000 jobs were added over the month. The national unemployment rate fell slightly to 9.1 percent after hitting 9.2 percent in June, the highest of the year. But the good news came in the number of jobs added, which was more than in the three previous months combined.

## **ENERGY**

Five members of Ohio's congressional delegation sent a letter Tuesday to U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu urging Department of Energy (DOE) action on a loan guarantee for CODA Automotive, which plans to manufacture electric car batteries in central Ohio in partnership with Chinese firm Lio Energy Systems.

The U.S. Department of Energy awarded \$3 million to two Ohio advanced vehicle projects as part of a larger round of \$175 million in advanced energy grants to 15 states. Ohio's awards ranked in 12<sup>th</sup> for total funding, with Michigan, California, Massachusetts and Arizona leading the country by a wide margin.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Some of Ohio's state and congressional representatives joined health care advocates during a media teleconference Thursday to support the Clean Air Act and recent proposals by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to Congress. The news conference kicked off the national campaign "Clean Air Promise," a new initiative started by Health Care Without Harm coalition.

## **ETHICS**

The U.S. House Ethics Committee said U.S. Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-OH) must repay free legal assistance she received from the Turkish Coalition of America, but said she should not face sanctions because her lawyers misled her about the gift.

## **FEDERAL**

U.S. Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) will be one of three Senate Republicans on a 12-member select committee charged with devising a plan to reduce the federal deficit by \$1.5 trillion, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said Wednesday. Other leaders in Congress also announced their picks.

## **GAMING**

A group that wants to build an entirely new racetrack in the Youngstown area said Friday it has chosen 140 acres on Bailey Road in Mahoning County as the site for the development. The Mahoning Valley Development Group, which includes individuals involved in the failed effort to build a casino in Clinton County in 2008, hopes to get approval from the Ohio State Racing Commission for an eighth racetrack in the state.

Ohio Racing Commission Chairman Robert Schmitz said Tuesday the panel and its staff will begin developing rules over the coming months for relocating and upgrading horseracing tracks in line with their planned installation of video lottery terminals (VLT). Schmitz said the commission can't formally begin the rule-writing process until HB277 goes into effect Oct. 17, but that the commission will be taking input before then. He said the commission might start meeting more frequently than its current monthly arrangement.

## **GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

The Delaware city prosecutor's office said it will not press charges again Sen. Kris Jordan (R-Powell) related to a 911 call his wife made alleging domestic violence. Assistant Prosecutor Joe Schmanky said he believes there's probable cause to charge Jordan, but said Jordan's wife, Melissa Jordan, the Delaware County recorder, didn't want to pursue the case.

Rep. Jarrod Martin (R-Beavercreek) pleaded not guilty to charges of drunk driving and child endangerment in Jackson County Municipal Court Thursday, the Dayton Daily News reports.

## **HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

The Ohio University/Appalachian Health Information Exchange Regional Extension Center (OU/AHIE REC) is the first of seven regional extension centers in the state to reach 100 percent of its target goal for signing 404 primary care physicians and healthcare providers for electronic health record (EHR) adoption

since last fall, according to the Ohio Health Information Partnership (OHIP). One hundred more southeast Ohio primary care providers may now sign up. Ohio University also received an additional \$450,000 when OHIP redistributed funding to allow more primary care providers in the Appalachian region to take part in the program.

Ohio ranked in the top quarter for incidence of glaucoma among states surveyed in a recent federal report, according to Prevent Blindness Ohio. "State of Vision, Aging and Public Health in America" from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vision Health Initiative found a 10.3 percent to 12.3 percent rate of glaucoma among Ohioans age 65 and above. The report surveyed 19 states, and Ohio ranked in the top quadrant, along with New York, North Carolina and Texas.

In a continuing series of reports on food hardship, new data released by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) found that more than 26.3 percent of households with children in Ohio reported in 2009-2010 that they did not have money to buy the food they needed at times for themselves or their family in the prior 12 months. The new analysis was released in Ohio by the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks. It uses data collected as part of the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index Project.

The Department of Aging brought in a national expert Thursday to help translate the health care buzz phrase "care coordination" into practical terms, specifically for the Medicare-Medicaid dual eligible population. Alice Lind, senior clinical officer at the Center for Health Care Strategies, nurse and a former quality assurance chief for Washington state's Health and Recovery Services Administration, said the patient's wishes and perspectives have to be kept at the forefront no matter how service delivery is structured.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION**

Sen. Chris Widener (R-Springfield) continued his campaign for state colleges and universities to rein in their land acquisition costs at Monday's Controlling Board, though all the requests he objected to were approved. Drawing particular scrutiny was Cuyahoga Community College's request to buy a building that state and local governments had helped pay to build. Widener said the institution should get some discount on the fair-market purchase price of \$6.3 million because state capital appropriations helped a nonprofit construct the building, which was erected with financing help from Cuyahoga County and on land donated by the city of Cleveland.

Chancellor Jim Petro's office unveiled its final plan for an "enterprise" university system Wednesday, proposing mandate relief for all 14 publicly funded universities in the first phase of the plan and additional freedoms awarded in a second phase for meeting certain targets. The biggest change from an earlier draft of the plan is the removal of language allowing certain universities to seek tuition increases up to double any legislative caps.

Progressive think tank Innovation Ohio quickly followed Chancellor Jim Petro's roll-out of his enterprise university plan with a series of questions raising doubts about the recommendations, with particular concern about the idea of tuition cap waivers. "Since Gov. Kasich seems intent on privatizing most everything else in Ohio, it's no surprise that he wants to turn Ohio State and our other great universities into quasi-corporations," Innovation Ohio's Dale Butland said in a statement.

## **INSURANCE**

A health consumer advocate group wrote a letter to Lt. Gov. and Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) Director Mary Taylor Friday asking for federal money to help consumers get involved in the review of health insurance increases. Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage said in its letter that consumers "have little access to meaningful information about rate increase requests, and there is no funding to provide consumers with the kind of research and actuarial assistance that insurance companies always have available."

Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor said Wednesday Ohio's 2010 average auto and homeowners insurance rates remained competitive compared with other states. According to the latest figures from the National

Association of Insurance Commissioners, Ohio has the 11th lowest auto insurance and 9th lowest average homeowner premiums in the nation.

## **JUDICIAL**

The Supreme Court of Ohio amended the Ohio Code of Judicial Conduct Tuesday to conform with the 2012 primary election move from March to May under the recently enacted HB194 (Mecklenborg-Blessing). The primary change applies to all judicial candidates on the 2012 ballot.

## **NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES (NCSL)**

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) convened its annual meeting Aug. 8 through 11 in San Antonio, Texas, with 150 policy sessions and a keynote address from Texas Gov. Rick Perry on the agenda.

The opening session of NCSL's Federal Health Reform Implementation Task Force plumbed the details Monday on what implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act means for states -- particularly focusing on health insurance exchanges. Joel Ario, director of the Health Insurance Exchange Group, Center for Consumer Information and Insurance for the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, highlighted rules issued by the federal agency July 11 dealing with the implementation of health exchanges. He commented its the guiding principle is state flexibility.

The Standard & Poor's credit downgrading could affect some upcoming congressional actions, according to Jeff Hurley of NCSL. Phase two of the national debt deal is a bipartisan committee of 12 legislators who have to find \$1.5 trillion in savings over the next 10 years. Republican legislators have said that they will only appoint people who won't consider revenue increases. The Standard & Poor's rating change of the nation from AAA to AA+ has already sent the stock market spiraling, and it could turn around the Republican revenue opinion, too. "That perhaps might open the door a little for a little more bipartisan effort," said Hurley.

At an NCSL session on the streamlined sales tax movement, former Illinois state senator and NCSL President Steve Rauschenberger had progress to report: Georgia became a full member of the sales tax effort on Aug. 1, having been an associate member since Jan. 1, 2011; and companion bills enacting the Main Street Fairness Act were introduced in the U.S. Congress in late July. Michigan is already one of the full members of the streamlined sales tax effort, while Ohio is an associate member along with Utah and Tennessee. A total of 24 states have passed the needed conforming legislation to participate.

Canadian Conservative Sen. Mike Macdonald of Nova Scotia came to the NCSL summit to promote increased trade between the U.S. and Canada, which he said currently averages about \$1.7 billion per day.

A panel at the NCSL meeting that included Ohio State Sen. Kevin Bacon (R-Columbus) examined the opportunities for states to implement, expand and/or improve home visiting programs under recently passed federal legislation -- the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Business expert and author Jim Collins told NCSL attendees that running government like a business shouldn't necessarily be paramount for legislative leaders. "If that's all we have then we merely have a prosperous nation, not a great nation," said Collins.

Despite recent backtracking by the Ohio General Assembly from a provision authorizing the secretary of state to develop an online voter registration process, representatives of Washington state and Maryland told those in attendance at an NCSL workshop that online registration is the way to go.

Education professionals at a Tuesday NCSL session discussed whether effective teacher evaluation is actually possible. Presenting at the summit was Anthony Milanowski of Westat, a research firm in

Maryland that looks at teacher evaluation. The problem with basing tenure or firings on teacher performance, he said, is that the policy "certainly seems like it might be" ahead of research.

The Transportation Security Administration told attendees at an NCSL session that it is working on improving the speed of its screenings with an upcoming pilot project in Detroit that will institute pre-flight screening for selected passengers.

A report released by NCSL during its 2011 summit shows 40 state legislatures enacted 151 laws and adopted 95 resolutions related to immigration so far this year. Ohio was not among those states, having proposed but not enacted any bills or resolutions.

Former Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum explained at an NCSL session his fight against the new federal health care law, which McCollum said he filed suit against seven minutes after it passed. That made Florida one of 25 states -- including Ohio -- to seek legal challenges against the law. McCollum said health care is a matter for the states.

Potential Republican presidential candidate and Texas Gov. Rick Perry spoke Wednesday about putting jobs first and money in the hands of private companies at the NCSL main session.

In a presentation at the NCSL Thursday general session, Republican pollster Neil Newhouse and Democratic pollster Peter Hart focused on two numbers related to the 2012 presidential contest: 443 and \$1 billion. That's 443 days until the 2012 election and the amount of money President Barack Obama is expected to have for his reelection campaign.

Ohio is giving in to groups like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and the national humane society, OFW Law Firm Senior Policy Advisor and former U.S. House of Representatives member from Texas Charles Stenholm said in an NCSL session Thursday. "I take my hat off to what Ohio did two years ago [when Ohio approved a constitutional amendment setting up the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board]. I put it half back on for them compromising too quickly," he said.

States must become actively involved to end human trafficking, actress Mira Sorvino told attendees at one NCSL Summit session on Thursday. "If we change state legislation to be as strong as it can possibly be, all of you will be saving lives, literally," said Sorvino, who also serves as a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador.

The future of nuclear power in the U.S. in the wake of the Japanese nuclear disaster was a topic at several sessions of the NCSL summit, with discussions focusing on safety, waste disposal and the industry's expansion prospects.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Monday awarded organizations, agencies and universities working in Ohio \$4,508,572 in grants under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The 11 grants are the first of 70 totaling nearly \$30 million that EPA is awarding under the GLRI in 2011.

An Ohio EPA report finds Northeast Ohio's Killbuck Creek watershed provides a relatively healthy environment for fish and other aquatic life but presents a challenge for humans hoping to recreate in it.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Natural Areas and Preserves said Monday it is scheduling special archery deer hunting sessions at nine nature preserves "to protect native plant communities from the increasing population of white tailed deer." In addition, ODNR said it will hold a lottery for a special deer gun hunt at Lake Katherine State Nature Preserve in Jackson County.

## **PENSION FUNDS**

Members of the Ohio Retirement Study Council sought Wednesday to give pension plans and potential bidders a better idea of what it wants in an independent consultant, approving answers to questions

about the consulting contract submitted by interested firms. The council avoided specifics in its answers to potential bidders' questions, not wanting to tip its hand as to how much it's willing to pay a consultant, nor wanting to pigeonhole bidders into taking a certain approach.

## **PEOPLE**

Rev. Jesse Jackson visited Columbus on Sunday for a press conference to address "three rights threatened" by state policymakers -- curtailed collective bargaining under SB5 (Jones), voting restrictions in HB194 (Mecklenborg-Blessing) and the proposal Ohio constitutional amendment seeking to block federal health care reform.

State Superintendent Stan Heffner announced the latest addition to his team Monday, saying Matt Cohen, longtime director of policy and accountability at the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), will take over as his chief research officer.

Former state Rep. Rocco J. Colonna, a Democrat who served the Brook Park area from 1975-1983, died Aug. 7 at the age of 77 in North Park Care Center, the Plain Dealer reported.

Kyle McDermott has been named the new executive director of the Ohio Democratic Party (ODP), a role he will assume after the November 2011 elections this year. The party said McDermott will first be fulfilling commitments to the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the We Are Ohio campaign to defeat Issue 2.

Former news anchor Holly Hollingsworth of NBC4 will head up corporate communications for AT&T in Columbus after a four-year stint in state government.

## **STATE GOVERNMENT**

Fulfilling a requirement in the Affordable Care Act, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has signed a contract with a Virginia company to help with audits of Medicaid claims.

Ohio and Kentucky are automatically sharing prescription drug data after the recent launch of the Prescription Monitoring Information Exchange, the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services and Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear said this week.

## **TAXATION**

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said in a new report that the effects of tax increases on migration are at most small, and that raising income taxes on the highest earners will lead to a net gain in revenue.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Ohio Department of Transportation and Office of Budget and Management said Monday it is seeking bids for a consultant to help guide the state through a potential lease of the Ohio Turnpike. The consultant is to help the state assess the value of the turnpike, write lease proposals and help in negotiations with the eventual winner.

The Obama administration is set to unveil the first-ever fuel efficiency standards for medium and heavy duty pickup trucks, vocational trucks, and combination tractors/semis. The proposed National Heavy Duty Program is projected to save \$35 billion in fuel costs, cut 98 million barrels of oil consumption annually by 2030, and clear 246 million metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution from our skies, according to the National Wildlife Federation.

## **UNIONS**

Teachers representing several regions of the Buckeye State have filed a class action suit demanding that a federal court in Columbus stop the "compulsory unionism" of the Ohio Education Association (OEA) and, by association, its local affiliates and parent organization, the National Education Association. The 15 teachers suing on behalf of non-members of OEA say the group is violating their constitutional rights by continuing to deduct union dues for political activities and policy positions they oppose.

## **UTILITIES**

Duke Energy said that two firms, ISS Proxy Advisory Services and Glass, Lewis & Co., recommended its shareholders and those of Progress Energy approve a proposed merger of the two companies, which would form the largest electric utility in the country.

A Public Utilities Commission of Ohio staff report found fault with multiple parts of American Electric Power-Ohio's proposed rate increases, saying a blended Market Rate Option would be better than the proposed Electric Security Plan; the proposed capacity charge is too high; and some of the non-bypassable riders AEP proposed should be made bypassable.

## **VETERANS**

Ohio is one of only 13 states to earn a share of \$5.4 million for homeless veteran job training announced by the U.S. Department of Labor Friday. The Buckeye State is marked out for \$300,000 of total allocations, matching the top award of any state. Funds awarded by the agency's Veterans' Employment and Training Service through its Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program will be administered by Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio.