

## Legislature Picks Up Action on Pending Bills

Ohio's full-time legislature kicked off the second year of the General Assembly with activity on numerous issues that are important to our industry and to business and the economy in Ohio.

One key piece of pending legislation is H.B. 376, which would create the Ohio Personal Privacy Act. OHLA is working to ensure that this legislation contains important protections to allow hotel & lodging businesses to conduct consumer transactions in a way that allows appropriate use of consumer data. This includes maintaining hotel loyalty and rewards programs which are valued by consumers.

OHLA supports provisions in H.B. 126 to provide important protections to businesses that file valuation appeals to lower their property tax burden when values have decreased due to COVID-19. Hotel & lodging businesses are already receiving determinations that lower their property tax bills for 2020, 2021 and 2022 as a result of S.B. 57, championed by OHLA and passed by the legislature last year.

## Elections will be a Focus from Now until November

After earlier versions were struck down by the Ohio Supreme Court, state officials created new legislative district maps for the coming 2022 elections and put a timeline in place for consideration of new Congressional district maps by the full legislature next week. The state is under pressure to finalize the new districts because of looming deadlines for candidate filing to be able to run in the May primary.

Spotlight will be on the elections for Governor and U.S. Senate. Gov. Mike DeWine faces challengers Jim Renacci, a former Congressman, and Joe Blystone, in the Republican primary, and Democrats John Cranley, former mayor of Cincinnati, and Nan Whaley, former mayor of Dayton, are running for the nomination. Candidates running to succeed retiring U.S. Senator Rob Portman include (but are not limited to) State Senator Matt Dolan, Mike Gibbons, Josh Mandel, Bernie Moreno, Neil Patel, Jane Timken and J.D. Vance for the Republican nomination, and Congressman Tim Ryan, Morgan Harper, Demar Sheffey and Rick Taylor for the Democratic nomination.

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost is reviewing language for a possible ballot issue that would prohibit vaccine mandates in Ohio. Two previous submissions were rejected because of problems with the language and the number of valid signatures required.

## Human Trafficking Awareness Summit Backed by Lawmakers

State Sen. Teresa Fedor (D-Toledo) announced that the 13th Human Trafficking Awareness Summit will be held virtually on Friday, March 4. It is co-hosted by Sen. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard) and Reps. Tavia Galonski (D-Akron) and Tracy Richardson (R-Marysville). Information on how to register and the speakers will be forthcoming.