



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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PRIORITIES FOR 2016:

CCAO Priority – Replacement of election equipment



CCAO and the Ohio Association of Elections Officials (OAE) are working to secure an effective state/county partnership to replace voting machines after the 2016 presidential election and prior to the 2020 election.

Ohio's electronic touchscreen and optical-scan voting systems, purchased primarily with federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) dollars, are at least a decade old. The estimated cost for statewide replacement could be approximately \$150 million. CCAO and OAE are seeking to replicate the purchasing model used this year for electronic poll books. CCAO members are urged to continue thanking lawmakers and the Administration for electronic poll book funding provided in the state budget and encourage state officials to continue partnering with counties to update voting equipment.

For additional information or questions, please contact CCAO staffers Cheryl Subler at csubler@ccao.org or (614) 220-7980 or John Leutz at jleutz@ccao.org or (614) 220-7994.

What to tell your state legislators . . . about replacing voting equipment:

- Remind them that your current voting equipment is reaching the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced with new voting technology.
- Outline and explain the continuing expenses counties must incur to insure the proper functioning of this equipment which include maintenance contracts, a climate-controlled environment for their storage, and proper technology upgrades.
- Ask that the successful electronic pollbook funding model also be used for voting equipment.
- Request that the legislature make planning for the replacement of voting equipment one of their priorities for 2016.

Priorities from Legislative Leaders



Rep Strahorn

The leaders of both chambers have shared some insight on possible legislative priorities that will happen in 2016. For the House Republicans, Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) said the House would like to look at changes to unemployment compensation as well as a capital budget. House leaders may also look to finish work on abortion legislation. He also indicated that there has been some work on a possible medical marijuana bill.



Speaker Rosenberger

Senate Republicans also plan to tackle abortion and medical marijuana. Senate President Keith Faber (R-Celina) said his Republican caucus will meet in a retreat later this month. He said they'll talk about proposals on public records dispute resolution, reviewing state

agencies and commissions to see if any of them can be closed down, and on ensuring there are no anti-trust violations going on with commissions and boards that regulate certain industries.



Senator Schiavoni

Senate Democrats will also be having a retreat to discuss its [caucus's priorities](#). Senate Minority Leader Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) indicated likely priority items are a water quality infrastructure bond issue to take to voters this fall, along with medical marijuana and changing the way federal lawmakers' districts are drawn. House Minority Leader Fred Strahorn (D-Dayton) said his caucus is worried about college affordability and the state's shift in reliance from income taxes to consumption or sales taxes. And he said in this campaign year, Democrats will also pay special attention to explaining how actions lawmakers take on taxes and other issues affect average Ohioans.



Senator Faber

The General Assembly will consider a state capital budget bill early in 2016 along with an anticipated MBR (Mid-Biennium Review) proposal from the Kasich administration.

Kasich sheds light on administration priorities

Governor John Kasich offered his thoughts on some of the more controversial issues that he and the legislature may tackle in 2016 comments during a recent year-end speech. There are many issues where it seems that the Republican Governor and the Republican legislative leaders have a difference of opinion. Ranging from raising the taxes on oil and gas to congressional redistricting reform, below are some issues the governor discussed.

Severance Tax: The Kasich administration and the legislature continue to have different positions on an increase in taxes on oil and gas produced via horizontal hydraulic fracturing.

“Let’s remember, this is one we just always agree to disagree on,” the governor said. “People say, you know, there’s not much drilling. Well, then there’s no severance tax. They say, well, the margins are smaller. Our [proposal] is based on a percentage of what they make. We’ll continue to [push for an increase]. I’ve always thought this is going to be a very difficult one. It took me 10 years ... to get to a balanced budget. What I worry about, though, is some enterprising politician or politicians who stick a severance tax on the ballot, jack it up real high and use the money for lots of things that people would vote for.”



Governor Kasich

Water Bond Issue: Senator Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and others are pushing for a multiyear, billion-dollar bond issue to pay for water and sewer system improvements, as part of a larger effort to improve Ohio’s water quality and prevent future toxic algal blooms ([SJR3](#) and [Healthy Waters Ohio](#)). The governor doesn’t appear to be on board with legislative proposals to place a billion-dollar bond proposal before voters to pay for water-quality improvement initiatives.

“I think we’ve spent a lot of money,” he said. “These folks have done a fantastic job in terms of not putting fertilizer on frozen ground. That was one that was praised by both the agriculture lobby and also the environmentalists. And we’ve spent a ton of money. I think we’re making progress on it. ... I don’t see any reason to really do any more at this point. I think we are doing a lot. This problem is multifaceted with this whole area being subjected to runoff with other states, with what happens in Detroit with their disposal system, with things that come out of Canada. We’re all working together to try to deal with this, and I think we’re dealing with it effectively. We spent a ton of money. We’ve now passed legislation. ... I think we’re going to get there on this.”

Renewable Energy Benchmarks: Kasich and legislators still have to reach an agreement on renewable energy mandates, which were placed on hold last year pending further review.

Last year, lawmakers passed and the governor signed legislation freezing Ohio’s renewable energy and efficiency mandates for two years, pending a review by a study committee and the possibility of change. Last session’s [SB 310](#) stemmed from law changes enacted about seven years ago requiring power companies to generate a certain percentage of their energy from renewable sources and to institute efficiency initiatives. Utilities are allowed to pass the costs of meeting the mandates onto their customers.

Among other provisions, the legislation froze renewable energy and efficiency benchmarks for two years. Absent legislative action in 2016, the benchmarks will restart in 2017.

“It’s one we’ve gone back and forth on,” he said. “I believe we should develop renewables, but we have to develop them at a rate that is consistent with the ability to not drive up the costs so high that our manufacturers have to buy out-of-state power at higher prices and put people out of work. But I think we also have to be part of the national solution on renewables, and the Legislature’s now beginning to look at what we should do, and hopefully we can reach an agreement because I would hate to go back to a 25 percent mandate. I don’t think that’ll happen. I think we will reach an agreement and we’ve got to not be ideological in this and figure out how this renewable mandate or renewable goal fits in without national perspective and Ohio’s economy.”

Congressional Redistricting: Kasich told reporters he supports congressional redistricting reform, and he said he's going to push the issue.

In November, voters overwhelmingly approved a bipartisan plan to reform the way Ohio draws its legislative district (state legislature) lines. Shortly after the vote, Republican House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger of Clarksville told reporters he thought the state should wait and see how the new setup worked before moving forward with a comparable reform package for congressional redistricting.

"I support redistricting reform dramatically," Governor Kasich said. "This will be something I'm going to do, whether I'm elected president or whether I'm here. I think we need to eliminate gerrymandering. We've got to figure out a way to do it. We've got to be aggressive on it. We've got to have more competitive districts. That to me is what's good for the state of Ohio and what's good for the country."

Bills Introduced



HB 422 OIL GAS LAW (O'Brien, S., Patterson, J.) To require recording and notification of assignments of leases for real property for the placing of an injection well, to revise the procedures and requirements governing the application for and issuance of a permit for a well to inject brine and other waste substances from oil and gas operations, to establish an additional fee on the injection of those substances, to require a person conducting brine or other waste substances operations prior to January 1, 2014, to obtain a permit or order to do so, to establish requirements governing ground water monitoring related to that injection, and to make other revisions in the Oil and Gas Law. Am. 317.08, 1509.02, 1509.021, 1509.22, 1509.222, 1509.223, 1509.33, and 1509.99, to enact sections 1509.023, 1509.228, 1509.229, and 5301.091, and to repeal section 1509.227

HB 423 MILITARY RECORDS (Perales, R.) To specify that an order for active military service or other documentation regarding the call to order of an individual in the Armed Forces of the United States or the Ohio organized militia is not a public record. Am. 149.43

Hearing Schedule



Tuesday, January 12

House Insurance (Committee Record), (Chr. **Hackett, B.**, 466-1470), Rm. 121, 10:00 am

HB 394 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (Sears, B.) To temporarily change the taxable wage base under Ohio's Unemployment Compensation Law, to remove dependency classes for unemployment compensation benefit eligibility, to temporarily freeze automatic increases for weekly unemployment compensation benefit amounts, to reduce the number of weeks for which an individual may receive unemployment compensation benefits, to abolish the Unemployment Compensation Advisory Council, and to make other changes to Ohio's Unemployment Compensation Law. --4th Hearing-All testimony

House Government Accountability & Oversight (Committee Record), (Chr. **Brown, T.**, 466-8104), Rm. 114, 1:30 pm

HB 178 WINE SALES (Manning, N.) To establish the F-10 liquor permit to authorize certain A-2 permit holders to sell Ohio wines at farmers markets. --4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible substitute & vote

HB 359 ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY (Duffey, M., Gonzales, A.) To create the address confidentiality program for victims of domestic violence, menacing by stalking, human trafficking, trafficking in persons, rape,

- HB 278** sexual battery and other crimes. --**5th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote HUMANE SOCIETIES (Hambley, S.)** To require approval by the board of county commissioners, instead of the probate judge, of appointments of agents by county humane societies outside a municipal corporation, to specify that a county humane society is a political subdivision, to make its directors, agents, officers, and employees subject to the Ethics Law, and to increase the salaries paid to the agents. --**1st Hearing-Sponsor-Possible substitute**
- SB 63** **ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION (LaRose, F.)** To create an online voter registration system. --**1st Hearing-Sponsor**

Thursday, January 14

Grace Commission, (Chr. Coley, B., 466-8072), Rm. 116, 10:00 am

SENATE AND HOUSE CALENDARS FOR JANUARY-JUNE 2016

SENATE	HOUSE
JANUARY	JANUARY
Wednesday, Jan. 20	Wednesday, Jan. 20 "if needed"
Tuesday, Jan. 26	Tuesday, Jan. 26
Wednesday, Jan. 27	Wednesday, Jan. 27
FEBRUARY	FEBRUARY
Tuesday, Feb. 9	Tuesday, Feb. 9 "if needed"
Wednesday, Feb. 10	Wednesday, Feb. 10
Tuesday, Feb. 23	Wednesday, Feb. 17
	Tuesday, Feb. 23
	Wednesday, Feb. 24
MARCH	MARCH
Wednesday, March 2 "if needed"	Wednesday, March 16 "if needed"
Wednesday, March 9 "if needed"	Thursday, March 17 "if needed"
Tuesday, March 22 "if needed"	
Wednesday, March 30 "if needed"	
APRIL	APRIL
Tuesday, April 5	Wednesday, April 6
Wednesday, April 6	Tuesday, April 12
Tuesday, April 12	Wednesday, April 13
Wednesday, April 13	Tuesday, April 19 if needed"
Tuesday, April 19	Wednesday, April 20
Wednesday, April 20	Tuesday, April 26 if needed"
Tuesday, April 26	Wednesday, April 27
Wednesday, April 27	

MAY	MAY
Wednesday, May 4	Wednesday, May 4
Wednesday, May 11	Tuesday, May 10 "if needed"
Tuesday, May 17	Wednesday, May 11
Wednesday, May 18	Wednesday, May 18
Tuesday, May 24	Tuesday, May 24 "if needed"
Wednesday, May 25	Wednesday, May 25
Thursday, May 26 "if needed"	Thursday, May 26 "if needed"
JUNE	JUNE
Wednesday, June 1 "if needed"	Wednesday, June 1 "if needed"
Tuesday, June 7 "if needed"	Tuesday, June 7 "if needed"
Wednesday, June 8 "if needed"	Wednesday, June 8 "if needed"
Wednesday, June 15 "if needed"	Wednesday, June 15 "if needed"