



STATEHOUSE REPORT

Published by: County Commissioners Association of Ohio

209 East State Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309
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January 16, 2015

In Inaugural Address, Gov. Kasich promotes values, says 'stakes are higher' in second term

Gov. John Kasich on Monday kicked off his second term at the helm of the state by urging its leaders and residents alike to focus the next four years on restoring what he called "bedrock values." Gov. Kasich outlined how he believes personal responsibility, family, empathy, faith and resilience will move Ohio forward.

"We all know that those values have weakened and it's essential that we come together to restore them. I think what some people miss is don't deal with just the symptoms, deal with the problem," he said during his inaugural ceremony at Columbus's Southern Theatre.

Detailing the pillars of his next term in office, the governor recognized former Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe for demonstrating resiliency as someone who was a prisoner of war and Department of Jobs and Family Services Director Cynthia Dungey for exploring ways to ensure that state social services don't lead to dependency and instead promote responsibility.



Gov. John Kasich

"We all have a duty to do our part for our communities, our families and to be accountable for ourselves," Gov. Kasich said, adding that people should not ask what someone else can do for them, but instead what they can do for themselves and for someone else. He also applauded the work of Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Executive Director Tracy Plouck, who he said has consistently stood up for those who might be "forgotten, disenfranchised, ignored or are suffering."

"Empathy is about respecting others enough to learn what they feel and think and there's no better person who models empathy than Tracy Plouck, he said. "I want to thank the legislature for the fact that they have understood that we never kept our promise to those who might live under a bridge or fight an addiction," Gov. Kasich continued, before describing the ODMHAS director's passionate push for Medicaid expansion, which is expected to be included again in the forthcoming executive budget.

In a similar vein, Mr. Kasich said it will be important going forward to give minorities a voice and to work to understand their difficulties and concerns.

He also said his administration will continue to nurture JobsOhio and reform what he described

as an "agrarian education system" so that it's more focused on preparing students for 21st century challenges and getting them excited to learn.

The governor took time to reflect on the past four years, touting an increase in jobs and rainy day funds and a balanced budget, as well as efforts to reduce infant mortality. He also promoted the administration's Community Connections, Employment First and Start Talking programs. "In some ways, the stakes are higher now than they were four years ago because we've made progress. Now we have more to lose," he said. "Not only do we have a future to reach out and claim, we've got to be good stewards of what we've already achieved; what we've already accomplished. "As we look ahead, let's not make a big mistake. Let's not get comfortable. We can't start thinking that we've done enough. We can't stop pursuing dynamic change. We can pause at moments to catch our breath and power up, but thinking we can ease up and slow down, that's a deception."

House Speaker, Minority Leader announce committee chairs and ranking members

The two House leaders announced the slate of committee chairs and ranking minority party members on Monday.

The committee structure includes a new Community & Family Advancement panel to be chaired by Rep. Tim Derickson (R-Oxford).

"In order to continue our momentum and to build upon our successes from the last General Assembly, I'm pleased to announce a solid, new committee structure for the 131st General Assembly," Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) said in a release.



Speaker Cliff Rosenberger

In a notable development, a black Democrat - Rep. Kevin Boyce (D-Columbus) - was named to chair the Minority Affairs Subcommittee of Community & Family Advancement. It's unusual for speakers to hand the reins of a panel, even a subcommittee, to a member of the opposite party."

The House committees and leading members are:

Agriculture & Rural Development:

- Chair: Rep. Brian Hill (R-Zanesville)
- Vice chair: Rep. Tony Burkley (R-Payne)
- Ranking member: Rep. John Patterson (D-Jefferson)

Armed Services, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety:

- Chair: Rep. Terry Johnson (R-McDermott)
- Vice chair: Rep. Rick Perales (R-Beavercreek)
- Ranking member: Rep. Hearcel Craig (D-Columbus)

Commerce & Labor:

- Chair: Rep. Ron Young (R-Leroy Township)
- Vice chair: Rep. Anthony DeVitis (R-Green)
- Ranking member: Rep. Michele Lepore-Hagan (D-Youngstown)

Community & Family Advancement:

- Chair: Rep. Tim Derickson (R-Oxford)
- Vice chair: Rep. Tim Ginter (R-Salem)
- Ranking member: Rep. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland)

Community & Family Advancement Subcommittee:

- Minority Affairs (Chair: Rep. Kevin Boyce, D-Columbus)

Economic & Workforce Development:

- Chair: Rep. Nan Baker (R-Westlake)
- Vice chair: Rep. Mark Romanchuk (R-Ontario)
- Ranking member: Rep. Kent Smith (D-Euclid)

Education:

- Chair: Rep. Bill Hayes (R-Harrison Township)
- Vice chair: Rep. Andrew Brenner (R-Powell)
- Ranking member: Rep. Teresa Fedor (D-Toledo)

Energy & Natural Resources:

- Chair: Rep. Al Landis (R-Dover)
- Vice chair: Rep. Christina Hagan (R-Alliance)
- Ranking member: Rep. Sean O'Brien (D-Bazetta)

Finance & Appropriations:

- Chair: Rep. Ryan Smith (R-Bidwell)
- Vice chair: Rep. Kirk Schuring (R-Canton)
- Ranking member: Rep. Denise Driehaus (D-Cincinnati)

Finance and Appropriations Subcommittees:

- Agriculture, Development and Natural Resources (Chair: Rep. Andy Thompson, R-Marietta; Ranking member: Rep. Sean O'Brien, D-Bazetta)

- Health and Human Services (Chair: Rep. Robert Sprague, R-Findlay; Ranking member: Rep. Emilia Sykes, D-Akron)
- Higher Education (Chair: Rep. Mike Duffey, R-Worthington; Ranking member: Rep. Dan Ramos, D-Lorain)
- Transportation (Chair: Rep. Cheryl Grossman, R-Grove City; Ranking member: Rep. Alicia Reece, D-Cincinnati)
- Primary and Secondary Education (Chair: Rep. Bob Cupp, R-Lima; Ranking member: Rep. Debbie Phillips, D-Albany)

Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development:

- Chair: Rep. Lou Terhar (R-Green Township)
- Vice chair: Rep. Steve Hambley (R-Brunswick)
- Ranking member: Rep. Christie Bryant Kuhns (D-Cincinnati)

Government Accountability & Oversight:

- Chair: Rep. Tim Brown (R-Bowling Green)
- Vice chair: Rep. Bill Blessing (R-Colerain Township)
- Ranking member: Rep. Kathleen Clyde (D-Kent)

Health & Aging:

- Chair: Rep. Anne Gonzales (R-Westerville)
- Vice chair: Rep. Steve Huffman (R-Tipp City)
- Ranking member: Rep. Nickie Antonio (D-Lakewood)

Insurance:

- Chair: Rep. Robert Hackett (R-London)
- Vice chair: Rep. Mike Henne (R-Clayton)
- Ranking member: Rep. Heather Bishoff (D-Blacklick)

Judiciary:

- Chair: Rep. Jim Butler (R-Oakwood)
- Vice chair: Rep. Nathan Manning (R-North Ridgeville)
- Ranking member: Rep. Michael Stinziano (D-Columbus)

Local Government:

- Chair: Rep. Marlene Anielski (R-Walton Hills)
- Vice chair: Rep. Scott Ryan (R-Granville Township)

- Ranking member: Rep. John Rogers (D-Mentor-on-the-Lake)

Public Utilities:

- Chair: Rep. Tim Schaffer (R-Lancaster)
- Vice chair: Rep. Kristina Daley Roegner (R-Hudson)
- Ranking member: Rep. Mike Ashford (D-Toledo)

Rules & Reference:

- Chair: Rep. Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster)
- Vice chair: Speaker Clifford A. Rosenberger (R-Clarksville)
- Ranking member: Minority Leader Fred Strahorn (D-Dayton)

State Government:

- Chair: Rep. Ron Maag (R-Lebanon)
- Vice chair: Rep. Stephanie Kunze (R-Hilliard)
- Ranking member: Rep. Ronald Gerberry (D-Austintown)

Transportation & Infrastructure:

- Chair: Rep. Terry Boose (R-Norwalk)
- Vice chair: Rep. Doug Green (R-Mt. Orab)
- Ranking member: Rep. Michael Sheehy (D-Oregon)

Ways & Means:

- Chair: Rep. Jeff McClain (R-Upper Sandusky)
- Vice chair: Rep. Gary Scherer (R-Circleville)
- Ranking member: Rep. Jack Cera (D-Bellaire)

Faber: priority legislation to be introduced following next week's committee assignments

The upper chamber's initial work will be guided by a list of 10 priority bills, which will be revealed soon after committee announcements are made next week, Senate President Keith Faber said Wednesday.

The Celina Republican wouldn't provide details about what the measures will entail, but said that they would be unveiled in a press conference that will be scheduled to take place sometime in the next two weeks.



*Sen. President
Keith Faber*

"Our plan was to designate them next week, but it will probably be the week after as we go through and get that together, but first it's getting committees, and I anticipate committees will be announced next week, and then after committees we'll work on priority legislation," he said in an interview.

He said the caucus will include Minority Leader Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman) in the priority measure discussions with the hope that some of the bills will be introduced with bipartisan sponsorship.

It's also likely that while the House will spend most of its first few months focused on the forthcoming executive budget, some of the Senate measures could be introduced in tandem with lower chamber priority legislation, President Faber added.

"We'll look at what they have and some of them will overlap, they always do, and some of them we'll do joint introductions," he said.

President Faber said the chamber will tackle other housekeeping items next week, such as joint ethics policies and rules.

Brown, Latta announce funding, legislation on toxic algae

Members of Ohio's congressional delegation Wednesday touted new federal funding and continued legislative efforts to tackle toxic algal blooms that have increasingly flourished in the state's lakes in recent years. U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Avon) announced \$1 million in new federal funds to improve water quality in Delaware County and another \$600,000 appropriation for Clermont County. The funding is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnership Program established in the 2014 farm bill, according to Sen. Brown's office.



Sen. Sherrod Brown

Soil and water districts in Delaware and Clermont counties will receive the money to help farmers enroll in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which provides resources to implement conservation practices that reduce phosphorus runoff that feeds harmful algal blooms. "EQIP draws on farmers and producers' local knowledge and networks in order to preserve water quality," Sen. Brown said. "This funding will help farmers throughout Delaware County improve conservation efforts to stop runoff before it starts."

Sen. Brown said he worked to secure more than \$3 million for EQIP funding in Ohio and has reintroduced the Clean Water Affordability Act, which would direct additional funding to eliminate combined sewer overflows, another contributing factor to harmful algal blooms.

Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Bob Latta (R-Bowling Green) reintroduced the "Great Lakes & Fresh Water Algal Blooms Information Act" to examine the causes and current mitigation efforts of algal blooms in the Great Lakes and other surface waters.

Rep. Latta said the measure would create a central information system to study and monitor the health of the Great Lakes.

"Last August's water emergency highlighted the importance of keeping these vital resources healthy, and my legislation would establish a comprehensive database to help better determine the causes of harmful algal blooms, as well as the best ways to combat them, so we can protect these national treasures for generations to come," he said.

Rep. Latta also recently reintroduced the "Drinking Water Protection Act," which would require the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to submit a strategic plan to Congress for assessing and managing the risks associated with algae-produced cyanotoxins in drinking water. "In addressing the health of our drinking water, we must take a thoughtful, robust approach," he said. "The Drinking Water Protection Act takes into account insight and testimony from key stakeholders at the local, state and federal level and fosters continued, ongoing coordination among the agencies involved."



U.S. Rep. Bob Latta

