



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Secretary of State announces partnership to clean up voter rolls

On Tuesday, Secretary of State Jon Husted announced a partnership with the Electric Registration Information Center (ERIC) to clean up voter rolls and make elections more efficient. Ohio is the latest state to join ERIC, which was created by the Pew Charitable Trusts four years ago and run by the member states, Secretary Husted said at a [Statehouse news conference](#).

The state's participation in ERIC will get more Ohioans registered to vote and further improve the voter rolls by tapping into new sources of data to check for any duplicate registrations and deceased voters that have yet to be resolved.

ERIC is a national, non-profit organization with 20 member states. It was founded in order to tackle the ongoing challenges of maintaining accurate voter registration records. ERIC uses data to figure out who is registered to vote, who might have moved, either to a new address or to a different state, and also to find people who are eligible to vote but not registered, said David Becker, Pew's director of election initiatives. The partnership will help the state make sure people are properly registered to vote, cutting down on the number of provisional ballots that are cast.



Secretary Husted

The system works year-round to compare voter registrations with data from the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Social Security death rolls and data sets from other member states to detect voters who might have moved. The secretary's office will then reach out to those voters to make sure they update their registration if needed. By making sure voters are registered at their actual address, it will ease confusion at the polls on Election Day, Mr. Husted said.

The system will also help Ohio identify eligible voters who have not yet registered, using data from the BMV and other sources. Secretary Husted said he plans to send out mailings to identified eligible voters before sending out mailings with instructions for requesting absentee ballots around Labor Day. A \$400,000 grant from Pew will help pay for contacting the eligible voters. They expect to reach out to between 1.5 million and 2.25 million people.

Since Secretary Husted took office in 2011, Ohio has removed nearly 475,000 deceased voters from the rolls and resolved over 1.3 million duplicate registrations. Over 1.5 million voters have updated their registration after receiving the state's National Change of Address mailing and 343,000 Ohioans have utilized Secretary Husted's new online change of address tool.

Other Election News – Kasich Vetoes Election Bill:



Governor Kasich

Gov. John Kasich vetoed [Senate Bill 296](#), Seitz (R-Cincinnati) which set out conditions under which a court could order a polling place be kept open for extended hours on the day of an election.

According to a [statement from the governor's office](#), "I agree that there is a need to create a uniform process for the common pleas judges in all 88 counties to follow when they may be considering requests to keep polling places open after 7:30 p.m. due to some extraordinary circumstance," said Governor Kasich.

"I also believe that the process this bill would create is sound and would prevent frivolous injunction requests from being granted. I look forward to working with the General Assembly in the future to see this process become law. The bill's provision that eliminates the judicial discretion to waive the bond is a step too far, however, and should not become law. For these reasons, I am vetoing Substitute Senate Bill Number 296."

The text of Kasich's veto message is below and can be found [here](#).

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

Multi-System Youth Committee

The Joint Legislative Committee on Multi-System Youth continued its work to examine how young people involved in multiple government systems can gain better access to the services that will help them build healthy and productive lives.

On Wednesday the legislative panel heard from the Department of Youth Services (DYS) about community based programs. DYS Director Harvey Reed outlined some of the programs the department uses to support options other than incarceration for young people in the juvenile justice system.

Two programs highlighted were:

- The RECLAIM initiative, which provides funding for juvenile courts to develop or purchase community-based options rather than sending offenders to institutions.
- The Behavioral Health/Juvenile Justice Initiative, which is a partnership between DYS and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to provide in-home behavioral health treatment instead of justice intervention or incarceration.

Maureen Corcoran, President of Vorys Health Care Advisors, gave the committee some insight into what other states are doing to curb the incidence of parents relinquishing custody in order to get services for their children. Using Texas as an example, she showed how that state now requires regular reports on the issues related to multi-system youth and sought a Medicaid waiver to help provide behavioral health services for children. Texas also offers joint conservatorships as an alternative to having parents relinquish custody.

The committee is expected to vote on recommendations at its next meeting on June 29th.

For more information on multi-system youth please contact CCAO Policy Analyst Kate Neithammer at 614-220-7996 or kneithammer@ccao.org.

Small and Medium-Sized Cities continue to struggle



The state's small and medium-sized "legacy cities" continue to decline, according to a new report released by the Greater Ohio Policy Center. The report, [From Akron to Zanesville: How Are Ohio's Small and Mid-Sized Legacy Cities Faring?](#), found that while larger legacy cities have shown some signs of improvement, their smaller counterparts have not.

"While small and mid-sized cities have also made efforts to revitalize, many of these cities lack the critical mass of inherent assets of larger places -such as major employers, significant cultural institutions, and a substantial philanthropic community - that can help kick start reinvestment and growth," the report found.

The most pressing issue facing small and mid-sized legacy cities - defined as those with a population of at least 20,000 people, situated in metropolitan areas with populations of less than one million with industrial economy - is a decline in the labor participation rate, according to the report.

The rate of labor force participation in those cities in 2014 was 57.5%, well below the nationwide average of 63.9%. The report also found that from 2009 to 2014, the labor force participation rate fell by at least 5% in seven cities, including Xenia, where the rate dropped 12%.

The report also found that poverty grew by 70% in small legacy cities from 2000 to 2014. "Ohio's small and mid-sized older industrial cities have historically made up a critical part of the state's economic and social fabric, and they remain important economic drivers for their regions and for Ohio as a whole," Lavea Brachman, executive director of Greater Ohio Policy Center, said in a statement.

"Unfortunately, the economic headwinds of recent decades have proved difficult for these cities to overcome. Despite some strong leadership and creative revitalization efforts on the local and state levels, these challenges were only exacerbated by the impact of the Great Recession. While these cities face a number of challenges, we strongly believe that with additional strategic interventions and collaborative efforts by state and local leaders, the trends highlighted in this report will not be these cities' destinies."

In an effort to revitalize the economies in those communities, the group recommends:

- Longer and short-term strategies focused on sustaining strong neighborhoods;
- Strategies building on each city's unique local assets to stimulate economic development;

- Regional collaborations to promote investments in downtown cores;
- And state interventions to account for differing local conditions.

"Ohio's small and mid-sized legacy cities face distinct challenges that will require creativity and collaboration to confront," the report concludes. "While larger legacy cities have a number of assets that have helped them make small gains over the past 15 years, small and mid-sized cities continued to see precipitous declines in economic health, housing markets, and population that were only compounded by the Great Recession. In some cases, these negative trends are bleeding over into surrounding regions, meaning that suburban growth is no longer insulating these regions from their central cities' declines."

Statehouse, Etc.



Former U.S Senator, Governor and Cuyahoga County Commissioner Voinovich passes away



Sunday morning Ohio lost one of the most popular Buckeye State public servants. Former Cleveland Mayor, U.S. Sen. and Gov. George Victor Voinovich, a Republican from Cleveland died early Sunday morning at the age of 79.

Mr. Voinovich, who retired from the Senate at the end of his second, six-year term in 2010, had a career in public service that spanned 47 years, 43 in elective office including serving as a Cuyahoga County Commissioner from 1977-1978. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Janet; three children, George F., Betsy and Peter, and many other family members. He was preceded in death by daughter Molly.

Representative Tim Brown (R-Bowling Green) to stepdown from the Ohio House. Rep. Brown, a former Wood County Commissioner, announced he is leaving to become president of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments. Brown, who is in his second term, chairs the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee.

"It has been a tremendous honor to serve the people of the 3rd House District," Rep. Brown said in a statement. "Additionally, I want to specifically thank the speaker for allowing me to take a more active role and serve as chairman of the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee. "



CCAO wants to thank Rep Brown for all his hard work and support while he served in the legislature. We wish him well in his new endeavor.

Bills Introduced



[HB 582](#) ■ **ORPHANED WELLS** ([Thompson, A.](#), [O'Brien, S.](#)) To allow a landowner to report an idle and orphaned well or abandoned well, to require the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management to inspect and classify such a well, and to require the Chief to begin plugging a well classified as distressed-high priority within a specified time period. Am. 1509.071 and 1509.34