



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Legislator renews call on Kasich to declare Maumee watershed “distressed”

This week State Representative Teresa Fedor (D-Toledo) called again on Governor John Kasich to declare the Maumee watershed “distressed.” Such declaration would trigger more stringent regulations on the storage, handling and application of chemicals and fertilizers throughout the area where waterways flow into the Maumee River.

The request follows an announcement earlier this week by Toledo officials elevating the city’s water quality status to “watch” from “clear” once toxins were detected in Lake Erie near drinking water intakes.



Rep Teresa Fedor

Four years ago, Gov. Kasich declared the Grand Lake St. Marys area a distressed watershed in response to toxic algal blooms. However, administration has resisted following a similar course for Lake Erie. Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Director Craig Butler has said the situation in the Maumee watershed is more complicated because the algae-feeding nutrients come from a variety of sources but the distressed designation only applies to agriculture. Butler instead is advocating for a more targeted strategy.

Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board continues discussions on police standards

The Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board, created by a governor’s executive order and charged with devising ways to soothe police-community conflict, continued deliberating Wednesday over proposed standards to guide local law enforcement agents on when to use deadly force and other issues. The members heard a presentation from Dan Shaw, regional program manager for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Shaw told that board that

CALEA has devised a set of uniform written directives for local law enforcement agents that are designed to improve agencies' relations with the community.



Director John Born

Director of Public Safety John Born, co-chair of the board, said the group's standards are one of several models for board members to consider as they draft new policies for police officers. In addition to CALEA, the U.S. Department of Justice and the International Association of Chiefs of Police have also produced standards of conduct that could help guide the board's deliberations, Born noted that the board does not have to reinvent the wheel since there are international standards that are well-accepted across the United States and the world.

The board has already circulated a draft policy statement for the first two standards that are due for final approval by Sept. 3.

The draft standards deal with the critical issue of the proper use of deadly force, as well as recruiting and hiring practices for police officers. These were the two issues that Gov. Kasich specifically called on the board to address when he created the board. After finalizing those standards the board is likely to start meeting quarterly to identify other standards that are important to improve police-community relations.

The board has a March 2016 deadline to issue a report that identifies all the agencies in Ohio that are in compliance with standards that have yet to be finalized. But before then it must further define what standards will be required to be met and then ensure that those agencies have the ability and tools to comply with those standards. The goal is to have all agencies at least meeting the minimum standards delineated by the board as the core functions of good community-police relations.

Human trafficking to be included in additional police training requirements

Attorney General Mike DeWine said that a portion of the increased police training requirements adopted in the state budget bill will likely be dedicated to tackling the problem of human trafficking in Ohio. Mr. DeWine said The Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA) will set new training requirements for human trafficking, along with several other issues recommended by a task force, such as community policing, use of force, and responding to people with mental health problems.

Speaking during the Human Trafficking Commission meeting Monday, DeWine said Ohio has made "tremendous progress" in recent years, but general awareness of forced labor and sexual exploitation remains a problem for the state. Last year, 4,975 police officers participated in human trafficking training through OPOTA, he said. DeWine indicated that he believes progress has been made in the public's understanding of human trafficking and that it is a problem, but there is still a ways to go, and therefore his office is going to continue to push education.

Marijuana proponents submit second wave of signatures

Proponents of a proposed constitutional amendment to legalize marijuana have made their second attempt to submit enough valid signatures to have the proposal on the November ballot. The group, ResponsibleOhio, submitted an additional 95,572 signatures to the Secretary of State for review.



On July 20, the Secretary of State determined ResponsibleOhio submitted 276,082 valid signatures, placing them approximately 33,000 signatures short of the required number to place the issue before the voters.

Separately, Secretary of State Husted earlier this week appointed a special prosecutor to review the petition procedures and subpoenaed records of the group's executive director, citing "significant disparities" between the number of petitions and signatures the group claimed to have collected and those actually submitted.

ResponsibleOhio claims, meanwhile, that the group pointed out such discrepancies to Husted's office, and that the issue lies within his office and county boards of elections.

House seat open after felony conviction

The 89th Ohio House district seat is currently vacant after the felony conviction of former State Representative Steven Kraus resulted in his automatic dismissal from the legislature, per Ohio law. The district is comprised of Erie and Ottawa Counties.

Kraus, an auctioneer who was accused of stealing antiques from a home – a charge he disputed – was found guilty earlier this week by an Ottawa County jury.



Former Rep. Kraus

A new representative for the district will be chosen by the Ohio House Republican Caucus. A spokeswoman for the caucus indicated there has been no timeline yet set for the vote. The appointed individual will serve out the term through December of 2016, and face a general election in November 2016.

Former Ohio Democratic Party Chairman and former State Representative Chris Redfern held the seat prior to losing to Kraus last November by less than 1,000 votes. News outlets have reported Redfern is pondering another run for the seat, though he has cited his new business as a reason that may deter him from doing so.

Statehouse, Etc.



Medicaid report released. The Health Policy Institute of Ohio released their “[Ohio Medicaid Basics 2015](#)” report earlier this month. The report serves as a primer on the program, its delivery system, and some ongoing state initiatives related to the program.

Reminder: CCAO Budget Overviews. Check out the CCAO home page (www.ccao.org) or this week’s edition of CIDS for registration information about the five regional budget briefings the CCAO Policy Team will conduct in August. In addition, OSU Extension will provide an update. These are free to CCAO members and key staff.

Hearing Schedule



Tuesday, August 4

[Senate Agriculture \(Committee Record\)](#), [House Agriculture & Rural Development \(Committee Record\)](#), (Chr. [Hite, C.](#), 466-8150; Chr. [Hill, B.](#), 644-6014), Donahey Nationwide Ag./Hort. Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds, Columbus,

10:30 am (Updated: 8:46 a.m., July 21, 2015)

- Testimony from Tom Price, Chairman of the Ohio Expositions Commission; Virgil Strickler, General Manager of the Ohio State Fair; Dave Daniels, Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture; Jim Zehringer, Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources; Jack Fisher, President of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation; Dean Bruce McPheron, The Ohio State University College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences; Jim Chakeres, Executive Vice President of the Ohio Poultry Association; Ohio State Fair Junior Fair Board Members
- Pre-committee program with All-State Choir begins at 10:15 am