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# STATEHOUSE REPORT

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**October 10, 2014**

## **Speaker appoints House members to Energy Mandates Study Committee**

House Speaker Bill Batchelder (R-Medina) made his appointments to the Energy Mandates Study Committee created in SB 310 this week. The committee is tasked with assessing the costs of the state's renewable and energy efficiency requirements. The Speaker's six appointments are Representatives Peter Stautberg (R-Cincinnati) as co-chair, Ron Amstutz, (R-Wooster), Christina Hagan (R-Alliance), Louis Blessing (R-Cincinnati), Jack Cera (D-Bellaire), and Mike Stinziano (D-Columbus).

These House members join Senators Troy Balderson (R-Zanesville) the Senate co-chair, Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati), Bob Peterson (R-Sabina), Cliff Hite (R-Findlay), Capri Cafaro (D-Hubbard Twp.), and Shirley Smith (D-Cleveland) and Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) Chairman, Tom Johnson, who is a nonvoting member of the committee.

SB 310 puts a moratorium on Ohio's renewable and energy efficiency requirements that were enacted with the passage of the 2008 energy bill (SB 221, 127th General Assembly). SB 221 required utilities to sell 12.5 percent of their electricity from renewable sources and to help customers reduce consumption 22 percent by 2025. SB 210 freezes annual increases in renewable and energy efficiency standards for two years while the Energy Mandates Study Committee reviews the law.

## **First quarter FY 2015 state revenues exceed projections**

A rebound in non-auto sales taxes during September brought state coffers further above projections with the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015 in the books. Following a slump in August that the Office of Budget and Management (OMB) attributed to timing issues, overall sales taxes came in more than \$40 million, or 5.2 percent, higher than estimated for the month.



This overage, coupled with a boost in personal income tax collections, more than offset the negative variance in August. So far this fiscal year the \$5.038 billion in total tax collections is \$82.8 million, or 1.7 percent better than initially estimated.

The state collected a total of \$811.7 million in sales taxes during September, OBM reported.

So far this year the revenue source has realized nearly \$2.464 billion for state coffers, a total that is about \$16.8 million, or 0.7 percent, ahead of estimates revised at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Personal income tax (PIT) intake last month totaled about \$877.8 million, which was \$35.2 million, or 4.2 percent, ahead of OBM's schedule. Through the first quarter of FY 2015 the state has amassed \$2.05 billion in PIT and has beaten expectations for the year to date by \$44 million, or 2.2 percent.

Collections came in under the estimate for public utility, cigarette and kilowatt-hour taxes in September, but the \$1.793 billion in total tax receipts during the month still beat projections by about \$57 million, or 3.3 percent, OBM reported.

## September casino revenue report

After hitting a three-month high of \$70.8 million in August, September casino revenues fell more than \$7 million below the August receipts dropping to \$63.3 million in September, according to Ohio Casino Control Commission (OCCC). The September profits also represent a decrease from the \$68.9 million the gaming facilities pulled in during September a year ago. Despite the decline in revenues in September, however, Ohio casinos have reported more than \$612 million in profits through the first 3/4ths of 2014.

Hollywood Casino Columbus also saw a large decline in monthly revenue in September, pulling in just \$15.8 million which was its lowest monthly revenue take since June of this year. The casino reported \$18 million in net proceeds in August.



Hollywood Casino Toledo saw its revenue drop to \$14.5 million last month; down from the \$15.9 million it saw in August, the commission reported. Horseshoe Cincinnati saw the slightest revenue decline, reporting \$16.2 million in net profits in September which was just below the \$16.3 million the facility pulled in during the previous month.

On the racino side, Ohio's seven racinos brought in a record \$60.6 million in net proceeds last month, according to the Ohio Lottery Commission (OLC). This record-high revenue exceeded August totals by more than \$3 million and came as Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway opened for its first full month of operation and Hollywood Gaming at Mahoning Valley conducted a controlled demonstration before opening its doors in mid-September. While profits increased overall, the state's five other racinos saw their net revenues decline over the month, according to OLC data.

Northfield's Hard Rock Rocksino led in racino revenues with \$14.6 million in net profits in September. The revenue, however, was down from the \$16.6 million the facility pulled in during the previous month. Columbus-based Scioto Downs followed with \$11.2 million in net revenue for the month which was less than the \$12.2 million it pulled in during August. Cleveland's Thistledown Racino also saw net revenue declines in September, as it pulled in \$9.5 million, compared to the \$11.1 million it recorded in the previous month.

Similarly, Lebanon-based Miami Valley Gaming's profits fell to \$9.1 million in September after hitting \$11 million in August. Cincinnati's Belterra Park reported the smallest amount in net

revenue last month with \$3.9 million. The gaming and entertainment center pulled in more than \$4.4 million in August revenue. Profits at Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway grew to \$6.2 million in its first full month of operation which was up from the \$1.8 million it saw during its August controlled demonstration and opening. Hollywood Gaming Mahoning Valley Race Course reported \$5.9 million in net revenue during its September controlled demonstration and nearly two weeks in operation.

For more information, see:

- The [monthly reporting of casino revenues](#)
- The [quarterly distributions](#) of the casino tax to the counties
- Access [VLT financial information](#) from the “racinos”

## Legislation of Interest



**[HB 630 POLICE SHOOTING REPORTS](#)** ([Beck, P.](#)) To require law enforcement agencies to submit a written report to the Division of Criminal Justice Services of the Department of Public Safety regarding the death of any person who is shot by the law enforcement agency's law enforcement officers and to require all law enforcement officers to complete in-service firearm training if in any year five or more of the deceased were unarmed. En. 5502.69.

**[HB 632 DRUG TREATMENT](#)** ([Beck, P.](#), [Milkovich, Z.](#)) To require sentencing courts or, under certain conditions, to authorize sentencing courts, subject to specified restrictions, to directly impose a term in a drug treatment program in sentencing an offender for knowingly obtaining, possessing, or using a controlled substance or controlled substance analog or for possessing, with purpose to use, drug paraphernalia and to require juvenile courts, under certain conditions, to make an order of disposition placing a delinquent child who commits either of those acts in a drug treatment program.

**[HB 633 UNIVERSITY DRUG TESTING](#)** ([Beck, P.](#), [Milkovich, Z.](#)) To require each state or private institution of higher education that sponsors intercollegiate athletic sports to adopt a policy in regard to drug testing student-athletes for banned substances.

**[HB 634 TREATMENT GRANTS](#)** ([Beck, P.](#), [Milkovich, Z.](#)) To establish treatment and diversion grants, to make a cash transfer, and to make an appropriation.

**[HB 635 ADDICTION PROGRAMS](#)** ([Beck, P.](#), [Milkovich, Z.](#)) To require the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to establish certain alcohol and drug addiction treatment programs, to require each state correctional institution to offer alcohol and drug addiction treatment programs, and to make an appropriation.