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# STATEHOUSE REPORT

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**November 26, 2014**

## **Crunch time approaching for lame duck session . . . contact lawmakers about HB 661/pay bill**

Following Thanksgiving lawmakers will return to the Statehouse for several weeks of lame duck session and possible action on House Bill 661, which addresses elected officials' compensation. County officials are urged to express their support for HB 661 to House and Senate members.

The bill is scheduled for a third hearing Tuesday afternoon in the House Finance Committee, at the time of this writing. CCAO understands that HB 661's sponsor, Rep Gerald Stebelton (R-Lancaster), will be talking with Committee Chair Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster) to request that the Committee consider a "substitute" version of the bill as well as list the bill on the Committee agenda for a "possible vote."



Rep Stebelton has heard lawmakers' are concerned with a few provisions in HB 661, and he is crafting a substitute bill that will make changes to address those issues. CCAO anticipates such substitute bill will include the following:

- For non-judicial county elected officials, a reduction in the number of population pay classes from eight to six. This would modernize the pay structure and provide a modest pay raise. The structure would be phased-in during 2015-2016. Officials can receive this higher compensation once their new term of office begins subsequent to HB 661's enactment. Thus, county auditors as well as the county commissioners who start their term January 1, can take the increase in 2015, while most other county officials would receive the increase in compensation in 2017.
- A traditional cost of living adjustment (COLA) based on the consumer price index (CPI) capped at 3 percent thru 2023 for local officials and judges. The COLA for county officials would begin in 2017, and it would begin in 2019 for judges.
- In addition, the proposal would provide county boards of elections members a similar adjustment to county elected officials.

- For judges, a 5 percent pay increase starting in 2015 and provided annually thru 2018. COLA would begin in 2019. (The judicial increases would be paid by the state.)
- For township trustees and fiscal officers, a nominal one percent increase along with the implementation of the COLA.
- Lawmakers and statewide office holders would receive a COLA adjustment starting in 2017. No change in salary would occur in 2015 or 2016.
- A study commission would be established to analyze compensation and make an advisory recommendation in late 2022 or early 2023

Again, CCAO encourages members to reach out to lawmakers to continue to urge support for HB 661 as well as to express appreciation to legislators who are committed to voting for the measure. The next weeks are critical.

If you have any questions, please contact CCAO Staffers Cheryl Subler or John Leutz at (614) 746-8507 or (614) 299-2800, respectively.

In addition to HB 661, lawmakers are slated to address many other bills, some which are listed later in the Statehouse Report hearing schedule, including the proposed sales tax holiday. As always, feel free to contact a member of the CCAO Policy Team if you have questions about a matter before the General Assembly or would like to testify before a Committee regarding your position on a bill.

## 131st General Assembly leadership teams

### House Republican Leadership

With term-limited Speaker Bill Batchelder retiring, the incoming House Republican Caucus elected [Rep. Cliff Rosenberger](#) (R-Clarksville) to serve as speaker of the House for the 131st General Assembly. Rep. [Ron Amstutz](#) (R-Wooster), who had long sought the top spot before joining Mr. Rosenberger's team last summer, was named the second-ranking speaker pro tem.



*Speaker-Elect  
Cliff Rosenberger*

The other members of next year's House Republican leadership team are:

- [Rep. Barbara Sears](#) (R-Sylvania), who maintains her current position as majority leader.
- [Rep. Jim Buchy](#) (R-Greenville), who will be the fourth-ranking assistant majority floor leader.
- [Rep. Mike Dovilla](#) (R-Berea), who becomes the fifth-ranking majority whip.
- [Rep. Dorothy Pelanda](#) (R-Marysville), who will be the sixth-ranking assistant majority whip.

Rep. Rosenberger named Mike Dittoe, the current speaker's spokesman, chief of staff for the majority caucus in the 131st General Assembly.

## House Democrat Leadership:



*Minority Leader-Elect  
Fred Strahorn*

Term limits also played a role in the Democrat caucus, where [Rep. Fred Strahorn](#) of Dayton was elected to lead the House Democratic Caucus in the 131st General Assembly. Mr. Strahorn will succeed Rep. Tracy Maxwell Heard of Columbus as Minority Leader. Mr. Strahorn served eight years in the House during an earlier stint and was a member of the Senate for two years. Between those terms, he was vice president of governmental affairs for the Ohio United Way.

Joining Mr. Strahorn in the top leadership positions are:

- [Rep. Nicholas Celebrezze](#) (D-Parma), assistant minority leader
- [Rep. Kevin Boyce](#) (D-Columbus), minority whip
- [Rep. Nickie Antonio](#) (D-Lakewood), assistant minority whip.

## Senate Republican Leadership:

While the House saw two new leadership teams, the Senate Leadership remain the same for both caucuses. Senate Republicans reelected their leaders to their same posts with [Sen. Keith Faber](#) (R-Celina) being elected to another term as Senate President. The Republican Majority Leadership:

- [Sen. Chris Widener](#) (R-Springfield) as president pro tem
- [Sen. Tom Patton](#) (R-Strongsville) as majority floor leader
- [Sen. Larry Obhof](#) (R-Medina) as majority whip.



*Senate President  
Keith Faber*

## Senate Democratic Leadership



*Minority Leader  
Joe Schiavoni*

The Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus also re-elected its leadership team, led by Senate Minority Leader Joe Schiavoni (D-Boardman). Besides Senator Schiavoni, the leadership team includes:

- [Sen. Charleta Tavares](#) (D-Columbus) as Assistant Minority Leader
- [Sen. Edna Brown](#) (D-Toledo) as Minority Whip
- [Sen. Lou Gentile](#) (D-Steubenville) as Assistant Minority Whip

# Hearing Schedule

Tuesday, December 2

**Senate Agriculture, (Chr. Hite, C., 466-8150), Grant Hearing Rm., 9:00 a.m.**

HB 490 **MBR ENVIRONMENT** (Hall, D., Thompson, A.) To revise certain laws governing agriculture, natural resources, environmental protection, telecommunications, video lottery terminals, and driver's licenses. --Informal hearing-All testimony

SB 116 **ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS** (Kearney, E.) To allow municipal corporations with a population of more than 50,000 to create municipal entertainment districts and to exempt persons within such districts from the open container law. --3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote

**House Session, (Chr. Batchelder, B., 466-3357), House Chamber, 11:00 a.m.**

**Senate Rules, (Chr. Faber, K., 466-7584), Majority Conf. Rm., 11:00 a.m.**

**House Transportation, Public Safety & Homeland Security, (Chr. Damschroder, R., 466-1374), Rm. 122, 1:00 p.m. or after session**

HB 617 **BMV PAYMENTS** (DeVitis, T.) To require the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and all deputy registrars to accept credit and debit cards for all transactions. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

HB 637 **ELECTRONIC DEVICES** (Damschroder, R.) To prohibit the use of an electronic wireless communications device in a school zone during hours when children are present outside or in a construction zone during hours of actual work and to make driving a vehicle while using a handheld electronic wireless communications device to write, send, or read a text-based communication a primary rather than secondary traffic offense. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

SB 255 **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** (Brown, E.) To permit a person to present proof of financial responsibility to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, a peace officer, a traffic violations bureau, or a court through use of an electronic wireless communications device. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

**Senate Session, (Chr. Faber, K., 466-4900), Senate Chamber, 1:30 p.m.**

**House Finance & Appropriations, (Chr. Amstutz, R., 466-1474), Rm. 313, 1:30 p.m. or after session**

SB 243 **SALES TAX HOLIDAY** (Bacon, K.) To provide a three-day sales tax 'holiday' each August during which sales of back-to-school clothing, school supplies, personal computers, and personal computer accessories are exempt from sales and use taxes. --4th Hearing-All testimony

HB 661 **PAY RAISES** (Stebelton, G.) To reinstate the cost of living adjustment for members of the General Assembly and statewide elected executive officers; to increase the compensation of justices and judges of the courts, county elected officials, township trustees and fiscal officers, and board of elections members and to reinstate the annual cost of living adjustment to their compensation; to reduce the number of population classifications used to determine the

compensation of county elected officials; to make an appropriation; and to declare an emergency. --3rd Hearing-All testimony

HB 115 **GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY** (Schuring, K.) To create the Local Government Bridge Fund for the purpose of providing grants to local governments up to the reduced amount of funds the government received in fiscal years 2012 and 2013 from the Local Government Fund to assist in the implementation of efficiency and cost-saving measures, and to make an appropriation. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 524 **LAKEFRONT TOURISM** (Budish, A., Lundy, M.) To require the Ohio development Services Agency to develop the Lakefront Ohio Economic Development and Tourism Plan for counties bordering lake Erie, to require regional institutions of higher education to jointly develop a proposal for the use of specified types of land in the region, and to make an appropriation. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 245 **PROPERTY TAX ROLLBACK** (Barborak, N.) To extend the 10% and 2.5% partial property tax "rollback" exemptions to new and replacement levies approved at the 2013 general election and to declare an emergency. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 267 **HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION** (Barborak, N.) To extend eligibility for the homestead exemption to elderly or disabled homeowners who did not receive the exemption for 2013 and have \$30,000 or more in Ohio adjusted gross income. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

**House Policy & Legislative Oversight, (Chr. Dovilla, M., 466-4895), Rm. 115, 2:00 p.m. or after session**

HB 624 **GUARDIANSHIP** (Pelanda, D.) To provide a ward's bill of rights and to require that a guardian receive the Ohio Guardianship Guide prepared by the Attorney General and acknowledge such receipt. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendment & vote

HB 81 **TAX EXPENDITURES** (Driehaus, D., Foley, M.) To provide for the periodic appraisal of the effectiveness of tax expenditures. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HJR 2 **VOTING RIGHTS** (Stinziano, M.) To set forth in the Constitution of the State of Ohio a specific right to vote and requirements attendant thereto. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 342 **PHOTO MONITORING** (Seitz, B.) To establish conditions for the use by local authorities of traffic law photo-monitoring devices to detect certain traffic law violations. --1st Hearing-Sponsor & proponent

**House Judiciary, (Chr. Butler, J., 644-6008), Rm. 114, 3:00 p.m.**

HB 614 **CRIMINAL LIABILITY** (Huffman, M.) To clarify when strict criminal liability is imposed or a degree of culpability is required for the commission of an offense, to modify the concept of acting recklessly, and to require that future acts creating criminal offenses specify the requisite degree of culpability. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

SB 207 **PARENTAL RIGHTS** (Patton, T., Manning, G.) Regarding the parental rights of a person who was convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, rape or sexual battery. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 542 **INVESTIGATION EXPENSES** (Barborak, N.) To permit a sentencing court to order an offender to reimburse a county, township, municipal corporation, or state law enforcement agency for funds expended by the law enforcement agency to purchase a drug, controlled substance, or controlled substance analog from the offender during the agency's investigation of a drug offense. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Possible vote

HB 586 **JUDICIAL PROPERTY SALES** (Stautberg, P., Ruhl, M.) To permit private selling officers to conduct judicial sales of real property. --2nd Hearing-Proponent

SB 177 **COMPANION ANIMALS** (Skindell, M., Hughes, J.) To include the protection of companion animals in temporary protection orders, domestic violence protection orders, anti-stalking protection orders, and related protection orders. --3rd Hearing-Opponent & interested party-Possible amendments

**House Agriculture & Natural Resources, (Chr. Hall, D., 466-2994), Rm. 116, 3:30 p.m.**

HB 453 **AGRICULTURE LAWS** (Pelanda, D.) To include diseases of concern within the scope of the Animal Diseases Law, and to make changes to the laws governing weights and measures and auctioneers, the membership of the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, and the pesticide licensing renewal process. --3rd Hearing-All testimony

HB 515 **TIMBER HARVESTING** (McGregor, R.) To establish requirements governing contracts for the harvesting of timber and enforcement procedures regarding and penalties for the theft of timber. --2nd Hearing-Proponent

HB 569 **ANIMAL FIGHTING** (Sears, B., Wachtmann, L.) To prohibit and establish an increased penalty for knowingly engaging in activities associated with cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 538 **JOBSOHIO GRANTS** (Driehaus, D.) To require that, if JobsOhio provides financial assistance for the cleanup and remediation of brownfields, at least 85% of the assistance must be in the form of grants. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 541 **DOGS** (Winburn, R., Blair, T.) To revise provisions of the Dogs Law governing nuisance, dangerous, and vicious dogs and confinement and restraint of dogs, to revise enforcement of that Law, to require the Attorney General to establish a registry of violations of that Law and related complaints, and to establish a notification process regarding complaints. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HCR 49 **ASIAN CARP** (Sheehy, M.) To urge the United States Congress to approve and fund a hydrological separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds to stop the spread of Asian Carp. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

**Wednesday, December 3**

**House Policy & Legislative Oversight, (Chr. Dovilla, M., 466-4895), Rm. 115, 9:00 a.m.**

SB 342 **PHOTO MONITORING** (Seitz, B.) To establish conditions for the use by local authorities of traffic law photo-monitoring devices to detect certain traffic law violations. --2nd Hearing-All testimony

**House Health & Aging, (Chr. Wachtmann, L., 466-3760), Rm. 116, 9:30 am (Updated: 4:55 p.m., November 25, 2014)**

HB 640 **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES** (Sprague, R.) Authorizing the Ohio Attorney General to place certain substances on controlled substances schedule I. --3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

SB 276 **INFANT SLEEP** (Jones, S., Tavares, C.) To require the Department of Health to establish the Safe Sleep Education Program, hospitals and freestanding birthing centers to

implement an infant safe sleep screening policy, and certain persons and entities to adopt an internal infant safe sleep policy. --3rd Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

HB 620 **RETIREMENT BENEFITS** (Huffman, M.) To provide for payment to an ex-spouse of part of any survivor benefits or return of contributions payable to the surviving spouse of a state retirement system member who dies prior to retirement and to modify eligibility requirements for benefits provided to survivors of deceased members of the State Teachers Retirement System and the Public Employees Retirement System. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

HB 588 **LIFE SUSTAINING TREATMENT** (Huffman, M., Wachtmann, L.) To establish procedures for the use of medical orders for life-sustaining treatment and to make changes to the laws governing DNR identification and orders. --1st Hearing-Sponsor

**Senate Agriculture, (Chr. Hite, C., 466-8150), location to be announced, 10:00 a.m.**

HB 490 **MBR ENVIRONMENT** (Hall, D., Thompson, A.) To revise certain laws governing agriculture, natural resources, environmental protection, telecommunications, video lottery terminals, and driver's licenses. --1st Hearing-All testimony-Pending introduction & referral

**House Agriculture & Natural Resources, (Chr. Hall, D., 466-2994), Rm. 121, 10:00 a.m.**

HB 515 **TIMBER HARVESTING** (McGregor, R.) To establish requirements governing contracts for the harvesting of timber and enforcement procedures regarding and penalties for the theft of timber. --3rd Hearing-Opponent & interested party

HB 453 **AGRICULTURE LAWS** (Pelanda, D.) To include diseases of concern within the scope of the Animal Diseases Law, and to make changes to the laws governing weights and measures and auctioneers, the membership of the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board, and the pesticide licensing renewal process. --4th Hearing-Possible amendments & vote

**Senate Session, (Chr. Faber, K., 466-4900), Senate Chamber, 1:30 pm**

**Thursday, December 4**

**House Ways & Means, (Chr. McClain, J., 644-6265), Rm. 116, 9:00 a.m.**

SB 42 **SCHOOL SAFETY** (Manning, G.) To authorize school districts to levy a property tax exclusively for school safety and security purposes. --4th Hearing-All testimony-Possible amendments & vote

**Senate Criminal Justice, (Chr. Eklund, J., 644-7718), North Hearing Rm., 9:00 a.m.**

HB 663 **DEATH PENALTY** (Buchy, J., Huffman, M.) To provide confidentiality and license protection for persons and entities involved in executing a sentence of capital punishment by lethal injection and to void as against public policy any agreement that prevents the supplying of any drug or drugs to be used in executing a sentence of capital punishment by lethal injection, and to amend the version of section 149.43 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect on March 20, 2015, to continue the provisions of this act on and after that date. --2nd Hearing-All testimony-Pending referral

**Senate Agriculture, (Chr. Hite, C., 466-8150), location to be announced, 10:00 a.m.**

HB 490 **MBR ENVIRONMENT** (Hall, D., Thompson, A.) To revise certain laws governing agriculture, natural resources, environmental protection, telecommunications, video lottery

**House Session, (Chr. Batchelder, B., 466-3357), House Chamber, 11:00 am**

**Senate Session, (Chr. Faber, K., 466-4900), Senate Chamber, 11:00 am**

**House Policy & Legislative Oversight, (Chr. Dovilla, M., 466-4895), Rm. 115, 2:00 p.m. or after session**

SB 342 **PHOTO MONITORING** (Seitz, B.) To establish conditions for the use by local authorities of traffic law photo-monitoring devices to detect certain traffic law violations. --3rd Hearing-All testimony