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# STATEHOUSE REPORT

*Published by: County Commissioners Association of Ohio*

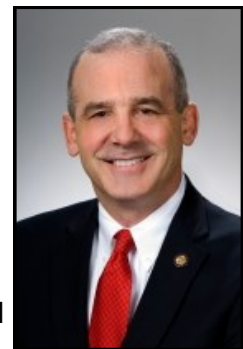
209 East State Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215-4309  
Phone: 614-221-5627 • Fax: 614-221-6986 • [www.ccao.org](http://www.ccao.org)

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**December 19, 2014**

## **Reapportionment ballot issue heading to the voters**

On Wednesday the Ohio House passed a bipartisan plan to revamp the legislative mapmaking process ([HJR 12](#)). The measure will go before voters in next year's general election. The sponsor of the measure, [Rep. Matt Huffman](#) (R-Lima), urged his colleagues to concur with changes the Senate made. The House voted 81-7 to advance the reapportionment resolution.



*Rep. Matt Huffman*

The measure now goes to the secretary of state, who will schedule an Ohio Ballot Board hearing to draft ballot language and a description of the proposed constitutional amendment. If approved by voters, the constitutional amendment will create the Ohio Redistricting Commission consisting of the governor, the state auditor, the secretary of state, and four members appointed by majority and minority leaders in the House and Senate.

Under HJR 12, a proposed map would need two minority votes to be approved and remain valid until the next regular decennial reapportionment process. If a map is adopted without minority support, it remains in effect for only four years, after which the commission would draft new districts for the remainder of the decade.

The proposed constitutional amendment also adds more requirements for mapmakers, such as how political subdivisions should be split when necessary. It would also require the panel to attempt to draw maps that don't favor either party and that correspond to voters' statewide preferences.

## **Changes made to Ohio's health insurance law**

Beginning 2016, Ohio law will authorize coverage of dependents on a health insurance plan only up to age 26, instead of age 28.

At the same time, an employee of a small employer will need to work 30 hours per week instead of 25 hours per week in order to be considered part-time in terms of the law governing small employers for health insurance purposes. (This does not apply to counties.)

The legislation, among other things, also makes clear that volunteer firefighters are not employees for purposes of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The changes come as the legislature signed off on language this week in [HB 201](#) (Butler) to make changes to Ohio's health insurance law that would mirror provisions of the ACA

in terms of qualifications for dependent coverage and part-time coverage, despite concerns raised by some democrats. Ohio's policies in these realms are currently more generous than the minimum requirements set forth by the ACA.

According to CEBCO staff, across the approximately 26,000 members on the CEBCO plan, less than 20 people will be affected by the dependent change from 28 to 26 years. These individuals will have access to health insurance through the marketplace and possibly elsewhere.

The provisions had been vetted mainly as a part of [HB 511](#), which received passage by both the House and Senate. However, due to unrelated amendments the Senate made to the bill to which the House did not agree, the bulk of HB 511, including the above, was instead amended into HB 201.

For those counties that are members of CEBCO with questions relating to HB 511, please contact Wendy Dillingham at [wdillingham@ccao.org](mailto:wdillingham@ccao.org); Mike Kindell at [mkindell@ccao.org](mailto:mkindell@ccao.org); or Melissa Bodey at [mbodey@ccao.org](mailto:mbodey@ccao.org).

For general information on the legislation, please contact CCAO Policy Analyst Laura Abu-Absi at [labu-absi@ccao.org](mailto:labu-absi@ccao.org) or (614) 221-5627.

## **Workers' comp PTSD language considered but not enacted**

Proposed statutory changes classifying post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as an injury for first responder public employees was put into play multiple times per Senate Republican action during the lame duck session. However, the House Republican caucus did not approve any legislation including the provision, meaning the measure did not become enacted.

Early last week, the Senate amended the language (largely identical to [SB 252](#), which passed the Senate in June) into House Majority Floor Leader Rep. Barbara Sears' (R-Monclova Township) [HB 511](#), dealing with health insurance laws. Rep. Sears urged her peers in the House to reject the Senate amendments, citing several concerns with the language. While the House rejected the Senate amendments to HB 511, the remainder of HB 511 was later amended and received passage by being included as an amendment into Representative Jim Butler's (R-Oakwood) [HB 201](#), which received final passage on Wednesday.

However, in a display of not-uncommon lame duck dynamics between the chambers, as each jockeys to get key priorities and bills approved by the other, the Senate Rules Committee yesterday amended the PTSD provision into yet another House Bill that was passed by the Chamber late yesterday: Representative Anne Gonzales' (R-Westerville) [HB 412](#), which primarily deals with laws governing physicians assistants.

In result, the House did not take up consideration of the Senate amendments to HB 412, meaning the bill did not receive final passage and will need to be taken up again next year.

CCAO has not expressly taken a position on the proposed policy, but did sign to [a letter](#) with other employer associations stating opposition to the measure being adopted hastily without the analysis and study critical to sound workers' compensation policy. Cost implications are unclear, and there has not been any conversation or debate in the legislature around whether workers' compensation is really the proper avenue for PTSD for these first responders, given mental health benefits are now an essential benefit under health insurance plans.)

(Sending individuals through workers' compensation effectively cuts off treatment for an allowable injury from one's health insurance.)

CCAO staff will work through the CCAO committee process and with other organizations to continue dialogue on this proposal, as it is likely to resurface in the coming General Assembly.

Please contact CCAO Policy Analyst Laura Abu-Absi at [labu-absi@ccao.org](mailto:labu-absi@ccao.org) or 614-220-7996 with any questions, comments, or concerns on this language.

## Many bills heading to the governor after final session day

The Ohio House held a marathon session to finish the 130th General Assembly. A host of bills are being sent to the governor's desk for his signature, including legislation to shield lethal injection drug suppliers ([HB 663](#)); a proposal to regulate tanning facilities ([HB 131](#)); and a bill to encourage local law enforcement to submit untested rape kits to the attorney general's office ([SB 316](#)).

Also passed by the House was a regional transportation improvement projects bill ([HB 494](#)) that was supported by CCAO. The bill was amended to allow for the creation of community entertainment districts, make changes to Ohio's income tax residency, and allocate casino license fees to the federal Military Jobs Commission, among other things.

As reported in last week's [Statehouse Report](#), HB 494 would permit county officials from two or more counties to enter into cooperative agreements for the purpose of undertaking regional transportation improvement projects. The legislation is designed to provide an option for the eastern Ohio counties that are a part of the US Route 30 corridor to finance the expansion of US 30 beyond its current two lane configuration.

House lawmakers also approved Senate changes to a reapportionment resolution ([HJR 12](#)) and education bills ([HB 178](#) & [HB 367](#)), and passed an adoption measure ([SB 250](#)) in their final session of the year.

## Farewell Speaker Batchelder

The Ohio House of Representative paid tribute and said farewell to retiring [Speaker Bill Batchelder](#) after nearly four decades of service to the institution. The stalwart conservative from Medina was term limited after serving his second stint in the House of Representatives. Speaker Batchelder, an attorney, former judge and constitutional scholar, leaves state service after logging 38 years in the legislature, including the last four as speaker.



*Speaker Batchelder*

## 131<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to begin January 5

Swearing-ins for legislators serving in the 131st General Assembly will be held Monday, January 5 in the Statehouse. There will be 29 new House members and four new senators. Steve Hambley, former Medina County commissioner, will begin his first term in the legislature. He joins returning "former commissioners" in the Ohio House of Representatives:

- [Representative Terry Boose \(R-Norwalk\)](#)
- [Representative Tim Brown \(R-Bowling Green\)](#)

- [Representative Tony Burkley \(R-Payne\)](#)
- [Representative Bob Hackett \(R-London\)](#)
- [Representative Dave Hall \(R- Millersburg\)](#)
- [Representative Brian Hill \(R-Zanesville\)](#)
- [Representative Rick Perales \(R-Beavercreek\)](#)

Former commissioners returning to serve in the Ohio Senate:

- [Kris Jordan \(R-Ostrander\)](#)
- [Bob Peterson \(R-Sabina\)](#)

For additional information on the January 5, 2015 legislative swearing-ins, please contact CCAO staffers John Leutz at [jleutz@ccao.org](mailto:jleutz@ccao.org) or Brian Mead at [bmead@ccao.org](mailto:bmead@ccao.org).