NAIOP Weekly Legislative Report
Prepared by: Law Offices of Matthew G. Kallner
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Supported Bills

HB10  **REMEDATION OF CONTAMINATED SITE** (SEARS B) To authorize refundable tax credits for the completion of a voluntary action to remediate a contaminated site and for the return of such sites to productive use, and to exempt persons through 2017 who have issued covenants not to sue under the Voluntary Action Program from certain fees and penalties for one year after the issuance of such a covenant.

   **Current Status:** 3/2/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fifth Hearing)
   **All Bill Status:**
   2/16/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Third Hearing)
   2/2/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)
   1/26/2011 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
   1/11/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
   1/11/2011 - Introduced

HB17  **TAX CREDIT FOR HIRING UNEMPLOYED** (BAKER N) To authorize a $2,400 income tax withholding credit for an employer that hires and employs a previously unemployed individual.

   **Current Status:** 1/11/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
   **All Bill Status:** 1/11/2011 - Introduced

HB18  **TAX CREDIT - EXPANDING BUSINESSES** (BAKER N) To authorize a nonrefundable tax credit for a business that increases payroll and expands into a vacant facility.

   **Current Status:** 3/14/2012 - **REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (Fourth Hearing)
   **All Bill Status:**
   2/15/2012 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED**, Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (Third Hearing)
   2/2/2012 - Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (Second Hearing)
   1/24/2012 - Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development, (First Hearing)
   1/10/2012 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development
   12/14/2011 - **PASSED BY HOUSE**; Vote 82-12
   12/14/2011 - Bills for Third Consideration
   12/6/2011 - **SUBSTITUTE BILL ACCEPTED & REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED**, House Ways and Means, (Sixth Hearing)
   2/23/2011 - House Ways and Means, (Fifth Hearing)
Oppose

HB50  TYPE-II ANNEXATION (SNITCHLER T) To require that a political subdivision owner be included in determining the number of owners needed to sign a petition for an expedited type-II annexation.

Current Status: 3/20/2012 - House Local Government, (Ninth Hearing)
All Bill Status: 1/31/2012 - House Local Government, (Eighth Hearing)
1/24/2012 - House Local Government, (Seventh Hearing)
12/6/2011 - House Local Government, (Sixth Hearing)
6/21/2011 - House Local Government, (Fifth Hearing)
6/14/2011 - BILL AMENDED, House Local Government, (Fifth Hearing)
2/22/2011 - House Local Government, (Second Hearing)
2/15/2011 - House Local Government, (First Hearing)
2/1/2011 - Referred to Committee House Local Government
1/26/2011 - Introduced

Monitoring

HB134  CAPITAL GAINS INVESTMENTS (SCHURING K) To reduce the income tax rate on capital gains reinvested in Ohio-based investments.

3/16/2011 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
3/2/2011 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means
3/1/2011 - Introduced

HB198  PROPERTY TAX COMPLAINTS (COLEY II W) To permit property tax complaints to be initiated only by the property owner.

4/12/2011 - Referred to Committee House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development
4/12/2011 - Introduced

HB357  ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE - TAXING DISTRICT (RAMOS D) To require JobsOhio and state agencies offering economic development assistance to obtain Controlling Board approval before providing assistance to a person who, at or near the time of receiving the assistance, relocates employment positions from one taxing district to
another or eliminates positions at an existing location.

**Current Status:** 11/9/2011 - Referred to Committee House Finance and Appropriations

**All Bill Status:** 10/26/2011 - Introduced

**HB436 SITEOHIO CERTIFICATION PROGRAM** (GROSSMAN C, ANIELSKI M) To create the SiteOhio certification program within the Department of Development to certify and market eligible commercial, industrial, and manufacturing sites and facilities.

**Current Status:** 3/15/2012 - REPORTED OUT AS AMENDED, House Economic and Small Business Development, (Third Hearing)

**All Bill Status:**
- 2/28/2012 - House Economic and Small Business Development, (Second Hearing)
- 2/16/2012 - House Economic and Small Business Development, (First Hearing)
- 2/8/2012 - Referred to Committee House Economic and Small Business Development
- 1/31/2012 - Introduced

**HB482 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS** (AMSTUTZ R) To make capital appropriations and make changes related to the laws governing capital projects.

**Current Status:**
- 3/20/2012 - House Finance and Appropriations, (Third Hearing)

**All Bill Status:**
- 3/15/2012 - House Finance and Appropriations, (Second Hearing)
- 3/14/2012 - Referred to Committee House Finance and Appropriations
- 3/14/2012 - House Finance and Appropriations, (First Hearing)
- 3/14/2012 - Introduced

**HB487 MID-BIENNIAL REVIEW BUDGET** (AMSTUTZ R) To make operating and other appropriations, to levy taxes and provide for implementation of those levies, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

**Current Status:**
- 3/22/2012 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)

**All Bill Status:**
- 3/22/2012 - House State Government and Elections, (Second Hearing)
- 3/22/2012 - House Local Government, (Second Hearing)
- 3/22/2012 - House Health and Human Services Subcommittee, (Second Hearing)
- 3/21/2012 - House Local Government, (First Hearing)
- 3/21/2012 - House Ways and Means, (First Hearing)
- 3/21/2012 - House State Government and Elections, (First Hearing)
- 3/21/2012 - House Health and Human Services Subcommittee, (First Hearing)
- 3/21/2012 - House Criminal Justice, (First Hearing)
- 3/20/2012 - House Finance and Appropriations, (First Hearing)
- 3/16/2012 - Introduced

**SB5 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REFORM** (JONES S) To make changes to Ohio's Collective Bargaining Law, which was first enacted in 1983.

**Current Status:** 11/8/2011 - Repealed by Voter Referendum

**All Bill Status:**
- 3/31/2011 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 7/01/11
- 3/31/2011 - Sent to Governor for Signature
- 3/30/2011 - Consideration of House Amendments; Concurred 17-16
- 3/30/2011 - PASSED BY HOUSE; Passed as amended; Vote 53-44
SB89  LABOR REQUIREMENTS  (JORDAN K) To prohibit state agencies from requiring or prohibiting certain labor requirements as a condition of performing public works and prohibit the appropriations of state funds for public works when political subdivisions require or prohibit certain labor.

   Current Status:  3/8/2011 - Referred to Committee Senate Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review
   All Bill Status:  2/23/2011 - Introduced

SB115  PROPERTY SALE GAINS  (KEARNEY E) To exempt from income taxation any gains from the sale of Ohio property used in a trade or business and held for at least two years.

   All Bill Status:  3/15/2011 - Referred to Committee Senate Ways & Means & Economic Development

SB294  ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LAW  (SCHAFFER T) To revise the laws governing environmental protection.

   Current Status:  3/14/2012 - Senate Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources, (Second Hearing)
   All Bill Status:  2/14/2012 - Referred to Committee Senate Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources

SB294  ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LAW  (SCHAFFER T) To revise the laws governing
environmental protection.

Current Status: 3/14/2012 - Senate Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources, (Second Hearing)

All Bill Status: 2/14/2012 - Referred to Committee Senate Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources
2/14/2012 - Senate Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources, (First Hearing)
2/9/2012 - Introduced

Bills Introduced Since 3/12/2012

HB474 INJECTION WELL LAW MODERNIZATION (GOYAL J) To require a background check of an applicant for an injection well, to establish recycling and treatment requirements for wastewater from oil and gas drilling and production operations, to revise the procedures and requirements governing the application for and issuance of a permit for a well to inject such wastewater, to establish an additional fee on that injection, and to establish requirements governing ground water monitoring related to that injection.

HB475 WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY (THOMPSON A) To designate March thirtieth as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day."

HB476 LOCAL GOVERNMENT JOB FUND (RAMOS D, PILLICH C) To create the Local Government Job Fund in the state treasury to provide funding to local governments for job creation, maintenance, and retention programs; to require the Director of Budget and Management, in any year that the state unemployment rate exceeds six percent, to transfer the amount, if any, that would be transferred to the Budget Stabilization Fund or the Income Tax Reduction Fund to the Local Government Job Fund; and to amend the version of section 131.44 of the Revised Code that is scheduled to take effect June 1, 2013, to continue the provisions of this act on and after that effective date.

HB477 PROSECUTION’S RIGHT TO APPEAL (SLABY L, BUBP D) With respect to the right of the prosecution in a criminal or juvenile case to appeal the court's decision, order, or judgment.

HB478 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME EXEMPTION (COMBS C) To exempt the state from participating in daylight savings time.

HB479 OHIO LEGACY TRUST ACT (HAGAN C, BLESSING L) To adopt the Ohio Legacy Trust Act.

HB480 BPA EXPOSURE HAZARDS (DRIEHANUS D, RAMOS D) Regarding the possible hazards of fetal exposure to the chemical bisphenol-A (BPA).

HB481 FUNERAL HOME LAW (HACKETT R) To authorize the Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors to license and regulate alkaline hydrolysis facilities and issue courtesy licenses to allow funeral directors in bordering states to conduct limited funeral-related activities in Ohio; to permit embalmers and funeral directors to place their licenses on inactive status; to clarify that, upon the sale of the funeral home, the home may remain operating based upon a submission of a new license application to the Board; to permit out-of-state funeral directors without a license to work with licensed funeral directors during a declared disaster or emergency; and to eliminate the requirement that funeral homes be the guarantor of the identity of decedents and instead require funeral homes to complete only visual identification of remains.

HB482 CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (AMSTUTZ R) To make capital appropriations and make changes related to the laws governing capital projects.

HB483 DANGEROUS WILD ANIMAL POSSESSION REQUIREMENTS (HILL B) To establish requirements governing the possession of dangerous wild animals and restricted snakes.

HB484 SHORT-TIME UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM (DUFFEY M) To create the short-time unemployment compensation program.

HB485 NURSE ANESTHETISTS (PELANDA D) To authorize certified registered nurse anesthetists to issue medication orders for the administration of drugs to patients during certain phases
of patient care and to specify the circumstances in which such nurses may perform clinical support functions.

**HB486 POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS (MILKOVICH Z)** To change the age at which an individual may make a political contribution, to reduce the amount of political contributions that may be made by a contributor, and to similarly reduce the amount of contributions that political entities may accept.

**HB487 MID-BIENNIAL REVIEW BUDGET (AMSTUTZ R)** To make operating and other appropriations, to levy taxes and provide for implementation of those levies, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.

**HCR36 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH (GARDNER R, GONZALES A)** Recognizing Woman’s History Month in Ohio, March 2012.

**HCR37 U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK SATELLITE OFFICE (STINZIANO M)** To urge the United States Department of Commerce to select central Ohio as the site of a satellite office of the United States Patent and Trademark office.

**HCR38 PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH (STINZIANO M, GONZALES A)** To designate March 2012 as Professional Social Work Month.

**HR292 SKILLED WORKFORCE RECOGNITION MONTH (ADAMS R)** To designate the month of March 2012 as "Skilled Workforce Recognition Month" in Ohio.

**SB311 HIGHWAY NAME DESIGNATION (GENTILE L)** To designate a portion of State Route 800 in Harrison County as the "Trooper George Conn Memorial Highway."

**SB312 CAPITAL RE APPROPRIATIONS (WIDENER C)** To modify the Adult and Juvenile Correctional Facilities Bond Retirement Fund and to make capital reappropriations for the biennium ending June 30, 2014.

**SB313 SCHOOL DISTRICT PROPERTY (SAWER T, LAROSE F)** With respect to offering school district property to state universities.

**SR198 SKILLED WORKFORCE RECOGNITION MONTH (WIDENER C, BEAGLE B)** To designate the month of March 2012 as "Skilled Workforce Recognition Month" in Ohio.

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**Week in Review**

**Friday, March 16, 2012**

**AGRICULTURE**

*How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?: The Story of Food* has been named the recipient of the 2012 Ohio Farm Bureau Award for Children’s Literature.

Three state agencies rolled out proposals Thursday to deal with increased nutrient levels from agricultural runoff in western Lake Erie, particularly phosphorous. Recommendations from the Ohio departments of natural resources, agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency begin with promotion of the voluntary 4R Nutrient Stewardship program. The four R’s stand for right fertilizer, right rate of application, right time and right placement. State officials on the conference call to discuss the proposals said they’d prefer to start with voluntary efforts, partly because more research is needed on the issue of dissolved phosphorous. But the state agencies do plan more aggressive efforts to address “bad actors.”

**ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Attorney General Mike DeWine applauded the Friday signing by Gov. John Kasich of SB223 (Bacon), which addresses cyber fraud, and SB258 (Manning-Patton), which establishes a statewide Blue Alert system. DeWine said that SB223 gives his office the authority to subpoena the phone records, Internet Protocol (IP) addresses and payment information in suspected cyber fraud cases and prepare them for prosecution by a county or special prosecutor. Regarding SB258, he said the Blue Alert “will assist law enforcement in the capture of an individual who has either seriously harmed or killed a law enforcement officer. Much like Amber Alerts and Silver Alerts, Blue Alerts utilize broadcast alert systems to relay
information about the suspect to the public in a timely manner." Both bills will become effective in 90 days on June 7.

Attorney General Mike DeWine's office sued Jeremy Nelson of Trabuco Canyon, CA, president of Jackson Hunter Morris & Knight, a company incorporated in Nevada that lists Newport Beach, California, as its principal place of business, for allegedly taking payments from Ohioans for debt settlement services but failing to deliver on promises.

An employee of Attorney General Mike DeWine was among four people stabbed at a downtown Columbus office on E. Gay St. Wednesday by a man whom police later shot. The employee was still in critical condition as of Friday.

**AUDITOR OF STATE**

Auditor Dave Yost marked Sunshine Week in Ohio Monday with the release of data from his office's test of cities' responsiveness to public records requests, finding about six in 10 could provide a "basic business document" within 10 days. He also urged state policymakers to explore ways to encourage responsiveness outside the courtroom.

**BALLOT ISSUES**

Attorney General Mike DeWine Friday rejected the petition for the proposed amendment to repeal and replace the definition of marriage in the Ohio Constitution, thus overturning Ohio's current constitutional provision defining marriage as only being between one man and one woman that was adopted in 2004. He identified three defects with the summary language including that the summary was longer than the amendment itself.

We Are Ohio, the group formed to successfully repeal collective bargaining overhaul SB5 (Jones) at the ballot box last fall, announced Monday that it is turning its sights on a repeal of elections reform law HB194 (Mecklenburg-Blessing) and defeat of a "right to work" initiative that conservative activists are seeking to put on an upcoming ballot.

**FY12-13 BUDGET/ FY13-14 CAPITAL BUDGET**

Two groups put out preemptive calls Tuesday against Gov. Kasich's plan for further tax cuts: the Service Employees International Union District 1199 and One Ohio Now, a coalition formed in advance of Kasich's first budget to advocate for a "balanced" approach that includes higher revenues, both said Ohio can't afford more tax cuts after local governments suffered funding reductions in HB153 (Amstutz).

In addition, Advocates for Ohio's Future, a group representing health, human services and early care and education advocates, urged the governor to seek reforms in five areas: jobs and workforce development; critical system reforms and improved service delivery methods; early care and education; and evaluating and development effective prescription practices. Group Co-Chair Gayle Channing Tenenbaum said in a statement that her group "is hopeful that an improving economy will help rebuild Ohio's infrastructure and support communities devastated by foreclosure and joblessness."

Gov. John Kasich and his cabinet officers introduced his long-awaited "mid-biennium review" (MBR) budget update, which includes an income tax cut fueled by higher resource extraction taxes, savings on top of the FY12-13 budget, and proposals related to K-12 education, workforce development, energy and taxes on banks. "The list of reforms in this budget is going to overwhelm the Legislature," Kasich said. "And you know what? Most of them are going to happen, because it's the right thing to do." Estimates from Kasich and lawmakers put the resulting legislation at between 2,000 and 3,000 pages -- although as of Thursday, it had not yet been introduced.

Extra revenue from revamping and in some cases increasing severance taxes on energy extraction would go into a fund that the next year would pay for an income tax cut, which Budget Director Tim Keen estimated could reach 5 percent cut at peak production. Other MBR proposals include a third grade
reading guarantee, to identify students in need of reading assistance early, but prevent social promotion to fourth grade if interventions haven't brought them to proficiency; a 10-point energy strategy that would add waste-heat capture to power sources recognized in alternative energy and efficiency standards; a revamping of banking taxes to simplify the structure but cut loopholes; health care initiatives to build quality incentives into Medicaid's payment structure for hospitals and encourage sharing of information, resources and staff among state health and human services agencies; and the elimination of barriers to service-sharing among local governments. A Cleveland schools overhaul being pushed by Mayor Frank Jackson isn't quite ready and will be included in separate legislation, Kasich said.

The Kasich administration accompanied introduction of the MBR with the first full capital appropriations budget in four years, a funding plan Budget Director Tim Keen described as "restrained," saying the administration wants to limit incurring debt service obligations for future operating budgets. He said the plan keeps debt service obligations to about 4 percent of revenue, well under the 5 percent constitutional cap. The plan includes no community projects, and Gov. John Kasich said the administration hopes to develop a formula for picking such projects to fund in the next capital budget. The budget includes $400 million for higher education and $675 million for the Ohio School Facilities Commission, $250 million of that from video lottery terminal license fees. The vast majority of funding for state agency facilities goes to maintenance and renovation. Notable exceptions are a new National Guard Armory in Delaware and a new crime lab for the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation on Bowling Green State University's campus.

Rep. Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster), chairman of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee, said the House will parcel the various MBR proposals among several committees and subcommittees, splitting some pieces off into separate bills. House Speaker William Batchelder (R-Medina) cancelled sessions on March 20 and 21 to allow committees time to work on the MBR, while adding a Thursday session for a likely vote on the capital budget, HB482.

University of Toledo President Lloyd Jacobs and Zane State College President Paul Brown testified to the House Finance and Appropriations Committee on Thursday about the inter-university collaborative led by Ohio State University President Gordon Gee to develop a unified capital funding plan among Ohio's universities and colleges. Jacobs said that method of allocating capital funding is as fair as the old distribution formula but more flexible and better able to address strategic state needs.

DISASTERS

President Barack Obama's administration Friday turned down an Ohio request to have Clermont County -- hit with severe storms and tornadoes -- declared a disaster area, which would have opened up the county to federal aid. The governor's office said no reason was given for the rejection and his administration has now applied to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for help.

ECONOMY

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the Ohio leading indicator index rose 0.2 percent in January to 90.9. This suggests employment will grow on a seasonally adjusted basis through late winter and spring, the department said. The number of initial claims for unemployment compensation dropped this month, but so did the average workweek in manufacturing and total valuation of housing permits.

EDUCATION

School districts in Ohio's urban counties saw wide success on the primary ballot, passing a series of funding issues ranging from property levies to bond proposals to income taxes. Canton Local Schools in the Big 8 was not among them, however, its $43 million, 30-year bond package suffering a major loss.

The State Board of Education Tuesday responded to the governor's push for expedited support of the Cleveland school overhaul plan -- now no fewer than 10 pieces of draft language and further revisions -- by delaying formal consideration of the plan for another month.
Beginning the second week of March, the State Board of Education and Ohio Department of Education (ODE) will partner with the Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA) and Ohio School Boards Association for "Start Ready, Graduate Ready," a series of 13 regional forums which will look at new college- and career-ready standards and new state proficiency testing in social studies, English language arts, mathematics and science that come online in the 2014-15 school year. The forums run through April 30.

Gov. John Kasich told the State Board of Education in a special Statehouse session Monday there can be no exception to academic success for all students and local education agencies (LEA), regardless of a child's socioeconomic background -- whether charter schools, technical schools, or traditional school districts, including the ailing Cleveland Metropolitan School District now pegged for major changes. He was joined by his new 21st Century Education director, Dick Ross.

Innovation Ohio, a progressive think tank headquartered in Columbus, released its analysis of Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson's education reform plan, which Gov. John Kasich has embraced as a model for his own education reform effort, finding both elements to like and elements which are "fatally flawed." Innovation Ohio (IO) said Ohio has a history of expanding Cleveland education experiments, such as private school vouchers, statewide.

Ohio teachers' unions say the school district overhaul proposed by Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and backed by Gov. John Kasich is not student-centered, as supporters argue, and instead represents an attack on classroom professionals similar -- in the view of the Ohio Education Association (OEA) -- to failed collective bargaining bill SB5 (Jones).

**ELECTIONS 2012**

Joseph Rosario DeMare, the Green Party candidate for the U.S. Senate who appeared on the primary ballot as a write-in candidate, said this week that he is challenging the unofficial vote count in his race, believing he qualified for the November ballot despite unofficial secretary of state totals showing he fell short.

**EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT**

The national unemployment rate remained at 8.3 percent for February, but the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) said the nation added 227,000 jobs over the month. According to BLS, the number of unemployed persons was essentially unchanged over the month. The labor force did rise, with the civilian labor force participation rate going to 63.9 percent from 63.7 percent in January, while the employment population ratio was 58.6 percent, up from 58.5 percent.

**ENERGY**

Gov. John Kasich Monday signed Executive Order (EO) 2012-03K implementing an emergency rule giving the Division of Industrial Compliance in the Department of Commerce (DOC) exclusive jurisdiction over the construction of shale gas processing plants in Ohio.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY/STATEHOUSE**

Columbus Rep. Carlton Weddington (D) resigned his House seat Tuesday shortly after being indicted on multiple counts by a Franklin County grand jury. As part of his agreement to cooperate, Weddington also withdrew as a candidate for the 25th House District in November's election. Franklin County Prosecutor Ron O'Brien said that Weddington was indicted on three charges: bribery, a third-degree felony; election falsification, a fifth degree felony; and filing a false ethics disclosure statement, a first-degree misdemeanor. He pleaded not guilty to all charges on Friday.

Rep. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) was the only person who applied Friday to replace Sen. David Daniels (R-Greenfield) in the 17th Ohio Senate District. The Senate Republican Caucus, in cooperation with the
county Republican parties in the district, set Friday as the deadline for applying for the seat that was vacated when Daniels became the new director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Peterson will need to run in the November in order to retain the seat.

Senate President Tom Niehaus announced Thursday evening that Sen. Shannon Jones (R-Springboro) will take over the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee that Daniels chaired. Her ascension to chair created a vacancy on that committee that Niehaus said will be filled by Sen. Cliff Hite (R-Findlay).

Friday, as Ohioans prepared to "spring forward" Sunday morning for Daylight Savings Time (DST), Rep. Courtney Combs (R-Hamilton) said he wants to repeal it in Ohio and keep the state on standard time throughout the year.

The Controlling Board approved a request from Attorney General Mike DeWine's office to pay a San Francisco company $290,200 for data storage after members of the panel were satisfied that the office is doing more to bring the work back instate.

The House Tuesday unanimously passed HB331 (Bubb-Dovilla), which creates the Cybersecurity, Education, and Economic Development Council, and HB415 (Sprague-Hill), which modifies the Agricultural Linked Deposit Program.

The House passed two bills at its Wednesday session: SB179 (Wilson), which would create Ohio geology license plates; and HB347 (Anielski), addressing non-chartered villages. The chamber referred back to committee SCR19 (Widener), which urges the federal government to pick Ohio as a test site for unmanned aerial vehicles.

The Senate on Wednesday passed three bills: HB389 (Hall-Okey), which deals with hunting preserves; SB134 (Wagoner), which designates Vietnam Veterans Day; and SB193 (Seitz), addressing scrap metal dealers. Senate President Tom Niehaus (R-New Richmond) said the likely appointment of Rep. Bob Peterson (R-Sabina) to a Senate vacancy could happen as early as next week. Peterson was the only applicant to replace Sen. David Daniels (R-Greenfield), whom Gov. John Kasich appointed agriculture director.

House and Senate Democrats joined with Ohio AFL-CIO President Tim Burga to call for General Assembly action on jobs bills during a press conference on Wednesday. Burga said that although there has been a "slight uptick" in employment, he said Democrats and Republicans need to come together on legislation to create jobs, support working families and the middle class, rebuild the state's infrastructure, support Main Street businesses, see that companies are paying fair compensation to employees, and properly fund state and local government services. Burga said he is disappointed that legislation introduced by legislative Democrats to create jobs has not had any hearings.

In other legislative action this week, the House Health and Aging Committee reported out HB367 (Maag), dealing with licensure of pediatric respite care programs; House Veterans Affairs Committee reported out HB280 (Dovilla-Wachtmann), which deals with the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program and Ohio War Orphans Scholarship Program; Senate Ways and Means and Economic Development Committee reported out HB18 (Baker), which creates tax credits for businesses expanding into vacant facilities; House Economic and Small Business Development Committee reported out HB436 (Grossman-Anielski), which would create the SiteOhio certification program to market business sites; the House Judiciary and Ethics Committee reported out SB196 (Wagoner) which would make changes to Ohio's Business Opportunity Plan Law; the House Local Government Committee reported out HB387 (Sears-Ashford) which authorizes county boards of commissioners to enter into agreements for the sale and leaseback of county buildings; the House State Government and Elections Committee reported out HB396 (McGregor-Murray) to revise rule-making and rule review procedures; the House Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee reported out SCR19 (Widener) which urges the federal government to pick Ohio as a test site for unmanned aerial vehicles, HB325 (Landis), an omnibus highway "naming" bill, and HB339 (Patmon), an omnibus special license plates bill; Senate Insurance, Commerce and Labor Committee reported out SB193 (Seitz) which revises laws governing scrap metal dealers; Senate Judiciary Committee reported out SB109 which addresses abandoned parcel trespassing; and Senate State and
Local Government and Veterans Affairs Committee reported out SB134 (Wagoner) which designates Vietnam Veterans' Day.

GOVERNOR

The governor signed SB83 (Oelslager-Tavares), which modifies advanced practice nurses' prescribing authority, and SB247 (Balderson), which designates July 9 as "Traumatic Brain Injury Awareness Day." Both of those will become effective in 90 days on June 7.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage released (OCHC) its analysis Tuesday of a Milliman report on setting up a health insurance exchange in Ohio, differing with its conclusions on the effect of an exchange in the state, and by extension Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor's use of the report as evidence the federal Affordable Care Act will hurt Ohio's insurance market.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released information that goes to another of Taylor's concerns: lack of clarity from the federal government on how states would be required to operate exchanges. HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius released rules governing exchanges Monday.

A national patient safety effort kicked off in Columbus Thursday as leaders from 34 children's hospitals across the country gathered to discuss ways to improve quality of care and patient safety in pediatric hospitals. A coalition of Ohio's eight children's hospitals has been involved the effort through the Ohio Children's Hospitals' Solutions for Patient Safety (OCHSPS), which formed in 2009 as a partnership between the hospitals and the business community to improve quality and reduce costs. The coalition said the effort has achieved a 60 percent reduction in surgical site infections in cardiac, neurosurgery and orthopedic procedures and a 40 percent reduction in overall adverse drug events, which it said has saved 7,700 children from unnecessary harm and avoided $11.8 million in unnecessary health care costs.

Business, policy and biohealth groups said Thursday they're launching a new coalition, We Work for Health Ohio, to promote the potential of the biopharmaceutical sector to improve Ohio's economy and wellbeing. "We Work for Health will seek to educate elected leaders, news media and the communities they serve about the important contributions biopharmaceutical companies and their employees make," said Andy Doehrel, president of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce and a co-chairman of the new group.

HIGHER EDUCATION

For the fifth year in a row, a member of Ohio State University's Department of Mathematics has received an Alfred Sloan Fellowship. For 2012, Matthew Kahle receives the two-year, $50,000 Sloan Research Fellowships, joining previous OSU recipients Roman Holowinsky (2011), Janet Best (2010), Chiu-Yen Kao (2009) and Jean-Francois Lafont (2008).

BuckeyeThon, a dance marathon that is Ohio State University's (OSU) largest student philanthropy effort, raised more than $454,000 -- doubling the fundraising effort from 2011. In addition, the number of dancers went from around 800 in 2011 to an estimated 1,800 this year.

Dr. Richard A. Ross of Columbus (Franklin Co.) was appointed to the Midwestern Higher Education Compact Commission for a term beginning March 12, 2012 and ending at the pleasure of the governor.

Cindy Sefton has been named director of the Johnnie Mae Berry Library at Cincinnati State. She succeeds Kathryn O'Gorman, who recently retired. Sefton has been employed at the Cincinnati State library since 2001, most recently as circulation services coordinator, with duties ranging from managing the collection to managing student assistants.

HOUSING
The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) and the National Low Income Housing Coalition jointly released "Out of Reach 2012: America's Forgotten Housing Crisis," which found that typical renters don't make enough to afford "safe and modest" rental housing in Ohio. The report identifies a needed full-time hourly wage of $13.43 for a family to afford "rent and utilities for a safe and modest home in the private housing market," making Ohio the 34th most expensive state. But the typical renter in Ohio makes just $11.20 per hour. The national housing wage is $18.25 for 2012, the report states.

Foreclosures in the state of Ohio dropped by 16 percent in 2011, the Ohio Supreme Court said Wednesday. The drop comes after Ohio saw a decrease for the first time in 15 years in 2010. According to data released by the Court, common pleas courts across the state reported 71,556 new residential and commercial foreclosure case filings, 13,297 fewer than 2010. The Court said Ohio hasn't seen that few filings since 2006.

As the Ohio Housing Study Committee comes closer to its March 31 deadline to report its findings on the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), Committee Chairwoman Rep. Cheryl Grossman (R-Grove City) Thursday continued to press OHFA Executive Director Doug Garver on how the agency handles its programs and how it is addressing housing needs in Ohio. Garver gave a presentation during Thursday's meeting of the committee on how the agency is identifying housing needs around the state and how it evaluates the effect of OHFA's programs on those needs. He said it is a complex issue and process because of Ohio's complexity and diversity.

JUDICIAL

The Supreme Court of Ohio will hold its next Off-Site Court Program at the Marion County Court of Common Pleas, on Wednesday, April 25. All regular members of the Court are scheduled to attend to hear four cases including ones addressing medical malpractice and age discrimination.

Ohio Supreme Court Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, co-chair of the joint Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness with Attorney General (AG) Mike DeWine, opened Monday's meeting with the announcement that the AG is directing $500,000 from a settlement toward the work of the task force. Stratton went on to say that they "don't intend to spend it all in one place," but will "spread it out among the [10] subcommittees," calling it "seed money" for what some of them may want to do.

The Supreme Court of Ohio ruled that under current state law, when a claimant or employer appeals an order of the Ohio Industrial Commission in a workers' compensation case to a common pleas court, failure by the appellant to name the administrator of the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) as a party and to serve the administrator with a copy of the appeal notice as required by R.C. 4123.512 are not "jurisdictional" defects (i.e., are not errors that deprive the court of subject matter jurisdiction to hear the appeal).

The assistant dean for administration and student services at Ohio Northern University's Claude W. Pettit College of Law, Mindi L. Wells, has been hired as the assistant administrative director of the Supreme Court of Ohio. She will assume her duties in early April.

The Ohio Supreme Court sided with East Cleveland Mayor Gary Norton Jr. in a unanimous decision exonerating him of violations of Ohio's Public Record Act. The Court reversed a judgment of the 8th District Court of Appeals granting a citizen $1,000 in statutory damages on the theory Norton had failed to produce the requested records in a "reasonable time." The decision resulted from a cross-claim filed by the mayor. The Court also upheld a separate finding of the appeals court that the citizen was not entitled to a writ of mandamus because Norton had provided all records cited in the petition request.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) released a preliminary report Friday that links recent Mahoning Valley earthquakes to disposal wells used to store wastewater from shale gas extraction. Gov. John Kasich had ordered a temporary halt to operations at wells in the area after earthquakes over the
holidays. In addition, the department released a new set of regulatory proposals it asserts will give Ohio some of the nation's toughest rules for handling brine from hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) said Monday it is planning another round of alum treatment at Grand Lake St. Marys this spring to address the high phosphorous levels that have led to toxic algal blooms in recent years. The second year of alum treatment is part of the state strategy to boost water quality at the lake, which includes dredging, wetland creation, installation of a treatment train and removal of rough fish, which strip up sediment to exacerbate phosphorous problems.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) said that Ohio law requires anyone who was born on or after Jan. 1, 1982, to show proof they have successfully completed an approved boater safety education course before operating any powered watercraft greater than 10 horsepower. To help with the requirement, the department, together with a number of its boating partners, are offering more than 80 approved classes through the end of May.

The Senate Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Committee Wednesday opened hearings on "exotic animals" legislation, SB310, with testimony from the chief sponsor, Sen. Troy Balderson (R-Zanesville), directors of the departments of agriculture and natural resources, and the state veterinarian. Balderson led off, telling the committee that the goals of SB310 are simple: "To protect our citizens, to preserve legitimate, law-abiding individuals who care for wild animals, and to put standards in place to ensure the safety of these animals."

**PENSION FUNDS**

The Ohio Retirement Study Council's outside consultant on pension reform presented council members Wednesday with an overview of how other states are addressing unfunded liabilities in their own retirement systems. William "Flick" Fornia of PTA/KMS said the income-replacement targets in Ohio's retirement systems are in line with those of other states whose public employees are not enrolled in Social Security -- about a quarter of all states. Retirement eligibility ages also are consistent with other states, but final-average-salary calculations and cost-of-living adjustments are higher than average in Ohio.

**PEOPLE**

Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP announced Tuesday that Leah Pappas Porner has been named managing partner of its Columbus office.

Former Butler County Commissioner and state Rep. Michael Fox received four years in prison after he was found guilty for conspiracy to commit wire and mail fraud and filing a false tax return. Fox was charged after an FBI investigation into the awarding of millions of dollars in loans to the Dynus Corp. in Butler County's name without its approval.

Amanda Hoyt, former chief of staff for the Senate Minority Caucus, has joined The Finance Fund as director of public affairs. She had served as caucus chief of staff since January 2009 -- her second stint in the Ohio Senate, having served as legislative aide and policy analyst from 1999 to 2002.

**STATE GOVERNMENT**

The Ohio Department of Development's Ohio Office of Tourism has released the 2012 Ohio Travel Guide and the 2012 Spring/Summer Ohio Calendar of Events. Both print publications are available free of charge from [http://www.discoverohio.com/](http://www.discoverohio.com/) or by calling 1-800-BUCKEYE or in a digital, interactive format on the website.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**
The administration initially indicated that it would develop a school-funding plan in the budget update to replace the Strickland Administration's formula but has long since abandoned that idea. Gov. Kasich said the proposal would further his plan to reinforce the link between K-12 education and career development. Rich Frederick, director of the Office of Workforce Transformation, said the bill would advance the administration's efforts to consolidate and improve the state's many disparate worker-training programs.