



## MID-BIENNIUM REVIEW ACTIVITY

Hearings continued on a number of bills included in Governor Kasich's Mid-Biennium Review (MBR) package this week. The House Economic Development and Regulatory Reform Committee had its first hearing on House Bill 486, the workforce development portion of the MBR.

Among the changes included, the bill would:

- Require the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation to establish criteria to use for evaluating the performance of state and local workforce programs
  - The office would use staff from the Department of Job and Family Services, Department of Education, and the Board of Regents for establishing the criteria
- Require the office to submit an integrated state plan for federal adult basic literacy, career-technical education, and workforce development programs to the appropriate federal agency by Dec. 31, 2014
- Establish the Adult Career Opportunity Pilot Program, which would permit a community college or technical college to develop and offer a program of study that allows individuals who are at least 22 years old and have not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalence to obtain a high school diploma
- Permit the Director of Commerce, the State Fire Marshall, and the Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board to adopt rules to establish compliance incentive programs

During proponent testimony, Director of Commerce Andre Porter said his agency took a broad look at the way they license and regulate businesses in the state. Porter said that during his first year as director, one of the practices that his senior team highlighted for him was that the agency currently treats "bad actors" the same way that it treats "good actors"—or businesses that consistently comply with the law.

"What we are proposing is a program that will continue to allow the Department of Commerce to hold businesses accountable, but will recognize and incentivize those who are consistently compliant," said Porter.

It is currently unclear how quickly the bill will move through the legislature. An additional hearing has been scheduled for April 1, but no votes are currently scheduled for the measure.

House Bill 483, legislation that includes various appropriations and changes to general government policy also received hearings this week. On March 26, the House Finance Committee heard from the directors of the Departments of Developmental Disabilities, Health, Aging, and Jobs and Family Services.

The bill includes the following policy changes:

- Beginning July 1, 2015, requires an individual to electronically file an application and weekly claims for unemployment benefits in a manner prescribed by the Director of Job and Family Services, except in specified circumstances
- Allows the Director of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to waive the assigned delinquency rate for unemployment filings if the failure to timely furnish the required wage information was a result of circumstances beyond the control of the employer or the employer's agent
- Requires ODJFS to develop and implement a data match program with each casino facility's casino operator or management company to identify child support obligors who are subject to a final and enforceable determination of default made under a support order
- Provides that an individual under age three may have a developmental disability if the individual has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability (rather than an established risk) of resulting in a developmental delay
- Requires a county board of developmental disabilities, when the superintendent position becomes vacant, to first consider obtaining the services of a superintendent of another county board of developmental disabilities
- Provides that "adult services" available through county boards of developmental disabilities no longer expressly includes adult day care, sheltered employment, or community employment services
- Requires the Ohio Public Health Advisory Board to review and make recommendations regarding proposed changes to policies that apply to Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program vendors

During proponent testimony, Department of Developmental Disabilities Director John Martin said one of the agency's signature proposals included in the bill allows the department to establish a voluntary online training and certification program to ensure providers are properly trained to work with and meet the needs of individuals with autism. He said the program will increase access to care in an area where the demand for well-qualified personnel exceeds the supply.

## ohio statehouse update this week in ohio march 28 2014

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Department of Jobs and Family Services Director Cynthia Dungey said a proposal to create a child support intercept program in coordination with Ohio's casinos and racinos would result in a higher percentage of child support collections. The proposal would work in concert with existing IRS requirements, whereby casinos and racinos stop play and collect tax information when a player hits a sizable jackpot. In these cases, when the casino or racino completes the required federal tax forms, it will also conduct an electronic check to determine whether the customer owes back child support. The system would then tell the casino or racino the amount to withhold and any remainder would be awarded to the customer.

The bill is scheduled for additional hearings on April 1 and April 2.

### LEGISLATION TO WATCH

*Recycled water:* Sponsored by Senator John Eklund (R-Chardon), Senate Bill 179 will include recycled water as a private water system for purposes of regulation by the Department of Health and boards of health. The bill passed the House on March 26.

*Retirement systems offenses:* Sponsored by Representative Mike Dovilla (R-Berea) and Representative Marlene Anielski (R-Independence), House Bill 162 adds extortion and perjury to the offenses committed by a public retirement system member that may result in forfeiture of retirement system benefits or the termination of retirement system disability benefits. The bill passed the House on March 26.

*Vehicle conversion program:* Sponsored by Representatives Sean O'Brien (D-Brookfield) and David Hall (R-Millersburg), House Bill 336 creates the Gaseous Fuel Vehicle Conversion Program, and allows a credit against the income or commercial activity tax for the purchase or conversion of an alternative fuel vehicle. Additionally, the bill reduces the amount of sales tax due on the purchase or lease of a qualifying electric vehicle by up to \$500. The bill passed the House on March 26.

*Tax overpayments:* Sponsored by Representatives Mike Duffey (R-Worthington) and Al Landis (R-Dover), House Bill 402 requires the tax commissioner to notify taxpayers of tax and fee overpayments, and authorizes the commissioner to either apply an overpayment to future tax liabilities or issue a refund. The bill was approved by the House on March 26.

*Capital appropriations:* Sponsored by Representative Ron Amstutz (R-Wooster), House Bill 497 makes capital appropriations and changes to the law governing capital projects. The bill passed the House on March 26.

*Minimum wage:* Sponsored by Representatives Mike Foley (D-Cleveland) and Robert Hagan (D-Youngstown), House Bill 502 proposes to increase the state minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour beginning Jan. 1, 2015. The bill was introduced on March 25.

*Emission standards:* Sponsored by Representative Andy Thompson (R-Marietta) and Representative Jack Cera (D-Bellaire), House Bill 506 requires the Director of Environmental Protection to adopt rules establishing standards of performance for carbon dioxide emissions from existing coal-fired and natural gas-fired electric generating units and to specify factors on which the standards must be based. The bill was introduced on March 25.

*Child placement:* Sponsored by Senator Eric Kearney (D-Cincinnati), Senate Bill 306 would require the Department of Job and Family Services to conduct a feasibility study of current trends in the placement of children by public children services agencies into relative caregiver homes. The bill was introduced on March 27.

For more information, please contact:

**Michael Caputo**

(non-attorney professional)  
216.348.5770  
mcaputo@mcdonaldhopkins.com

**Rebecca M. Kuhns**

(non-attorney professional)  
614.458.0043  
rkuhns@mcdonaldhopkins.com

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