

SPECIAL EDITION: OHIO LAME DUCK PREVIEW

This Week at The Statehouse

Lame Duck Overview

The Ohio Legislature is back in full swing through the remainder of the year, with five sessions scheduled between November 16th and December 21st.

As elected leaders and executive agency cabinet directors gathered at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce's *Impact Ohio* event, legislative priorities were top of mind as the state nears the end of the 134th General Assembly.

How Will Ohio Spend Remaining Covid-Relief Funding?

Senate Majority Whip, Rob McColley, noted both the DeWine Administration and legislature will be looking at how to utilize Ohio's remaining federal covid-relief funding, provided through numerous federal packages including the American Rescue Plan Act and Infrastructure and Investment Act. Specifically, many expect funds to be directed toward health care entities, such as nursing homes, and water infrastructure projects throughout the state. With around \$10 billion in Ohio relief funding remaining, OBM Director Murnieks pointed out that most of that funding is directed for K-12 education, while the state's flexible dollars are around two-thirds allocated to date.

Other Considerations: Criminal Justice, Election Law, & Distracted Driving

Further, Ohio Speaker Bob Cupp highlighted increasing interest in addressing criminal justice policy issues, including efforts on victim's rights and strengthening Ohio's domestic violence laws. Additionally, Speaker Cupp said his caucus will likely revisit the Ohio Elections Commission discretionary authority and legislation aimed at combatting distracted driving. And finally, the contentious issue of reproductive rights in the post-*Dobbs* environment will be a major consideration for Ohio legislators prior to session's end.

Our team at Byers, Minton & Associates will be at the Statehouse closely monitoring committee and session activity throughout lame duck. We will provide periodic updates as policy decisions are discussed and pursued through the end of the year. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.



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