



# The Ohio SHRM State Council *Monthly Legislative Report*



*Provided by: Tony Fiore*

Director of Governmental Affairs for the Ohio  
SHRM State Council

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## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES IN 2013

**September 18-20, 2013:** 2013 Ohio Human Resource Conference: HR – Making Connections that Count. Kalahari Resort in Sandusky, Ohio. Details and registration information available at [http://www.ohioshrm.org/hr\\_conf/](http://www.ohioshrm.org/hr_conf/)

## TOP HR NEWS IN OHIO

### *Minimum Wage*

On July 24, labor and community groups around Ohio took part in rallies supporting an increase in the federal minimum-wage. Similar rallies took place in other cities around nation. July 24 marked the fourth year since the last federal minimum-wage increase. A bill introduced by Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown in April of this year proposes raising the hourly minimum wage to \$10.10 from the current \$7.25.

In Ohio, the minimum wage is currently \$7.85, and state law requires the wage to increase yearly and to adjust to account for inflation. The next increase is scheduled for late-September of this year, with the increase to go into effect in January, 2014.

### *Right To Work Bills*

On June 6, the Ohio House Manufacturing and Workforce Development Committee heard sponsor testimony on HB151 and HB152, the so-called 'right to work' legislation. In response, David Pepper, the announced candidate for Attorney General issued a press statement detailing his opposition to the bills.

After having met with leaders of the House and Senate majority, Governor John Kasich said that right-to-work measures aren't his priority in the near future.

### *Ohio 2013 Ballot Measures*

Ohio's deadline for submitting qualifying citizen initiatives petitions for ballot measures to the Secretary of State's office was July 3. No qualifying petitions were turned in by that deadline. Citizen initiatives that had been discussed as possible ballot measures include the following:

- » **Same-Sex Marriage Amendment** – Would allow religious institutions to choose whether to recognize same-sex marriage.
- » **Medical Marijuana Initiative** – Would allow the use of marijuana for medical purposes
- » **Personhood Initiative** – Would define a person as any human at any state of development, including fertilization.
- » **Right-to-Work Amendment** – Would protect workers covered by labor contracts from having to join a union.
- » **Clean Energy Amendment** – Would provide state funding for clean energy initiatives.
- » **Initiative Reform Referendum** – Would submit [SB47](#) to a statewide vote.



## TOP HR NEWS IN OHIO

### *Jim Petro Endorses Freedom to Marry Amendment*

Jim Petro, former Ohio Attorney General and former Cabinet member of Governor John Kasich's administration, recently shared his plans to announce a 2014 ballot initiative that would allow same-sex couples to receive marriage licenses and to have the same legal rights as heterosexual couples. Petro publicly endorsed the Ohio Freedom to Marry and Religious Freedom Amendment, noting his personal experience with his daughter who last year married her girlfriend Jessica Gelman in Massachusetts, where same-gender marriages are legal.

Ohio's deadline for submitting proposed constitutional amendments is 90 days prior to the general election, which is currently scheduled for November 5, 2013.

### *Workers' Compensation Rebates*

On July 26, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Administrator Stephen Buehrer told his board of directors that the administration's employer rebate program is on track to return more than \$1 billion to the state's economy, with the bulk of checks going out in July. Buehrer redoubled the appeal for public and private entities to cash checks as quickly as possible and to reinvest the money in workplace safety.

### *State & National Unemployment Numbers for July 2013*

Data released early by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on July 18 showed that Ohio's unemployment rose in June to 7.2 percent as the state lost 12,500 jobs over the month.

On August 2, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the federal unemployment rate was 7.4 percent for July as the nation added 162,000 jobs.



### *HB230 (Tax Credit-Food Donations)*

State Representatives Cheryl Grossman and Marlene Anielski co-sponsored HB230 on July 11. The bill would authorize an income tax or commercial activity tax credit for businesses that donate food inventory to charitable organizations.

### *SB157 (Employment Tax Credit-Convicted Individuals)*

On July 11, Senator Charleta introduced SB157, legislation to create a tax credit for the employment of individuals who have been convicted of criminal offenses.



## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

### *Employment Law*

- HB82** OHIO'S CIVIL RIGHTS LAW EXEMPTION (HAYES B, BLAIR T) To exempt religious corporations, associations, educational institutions, or societies from the definition of "employer" for the purpose of Ohio's Civil Rights law.  
Current Status: 3/6/2013 - House Judiciary, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_82](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_82)
- HB120** GENDER PAY DISPARITY TASK FORCE (LUNDY M, DRIEHAUS D) Create Gender Pay Disparity Task Force.  
Current Status: 5/8/2013 - House Commerce, Labor and Technology, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_120](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_120)
- HB163** OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS LAW EXPANSION (MCGREGOR R, ANTONIO N) To prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.  
Current Status: 5/22/2013 - House Commerce, Labor and Technology, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_163](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_163)
- HB179** EMPLOYERS-COURT-ORDERED PARENTING TIME (BISHOFF H) To require certain employers to allow a parent to exercise court-ordered parenting time without terminating the parent's employment, reducing the parent's pay, or taking other similar action against the parent.  
Current Status: 6/12/2013 - House Commerce, Labor and Technology, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_179](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_179)
- SB45** PRIVATE ELECTRONIC ACCOUNTS ACCESS (TAVARES C) To prohibit employers, employment agencies, personnel placement services, and labor organizations from requiring an applicant or employee to provide access to private electronic accounts of the applicant or employee.  
Current Status: 3/6/2013 - Senate Commerce and Labor, (Second Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_45](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_45)
- SB70** OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS LAW (TAVARES C) To specify that discrimination by an employer against any person because of the person's credit history is an unlawful discriminatory practice under the Ohio Civil Rights Law.  
Current Status: 3/13/2013 - Referred to Committee Senate Commerce and Labor  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_70](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_70)
- SB92** WAGE DISCRIMINATION (TURNER N, TAVARES C) To enact the "Fair and Acceptable Income Required (FAIR) Act" and to revise the enforcement of the prohibitions against discrimination in the payment of wages.  
Current Status: 6/18/2013 - Senate Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_92](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_92)





## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- SB119** DOMESTIC WORKERS PROTECTION (TAVARES C) To require that domestic workers be paid the minimum wage, to require that domestic workers be paid overtime wages, to make certain conduct directed toward a domestic worker an unlawful discriminatory practice, and to require a weekly day of rest for domestic workers.  
Current Status: 6/18/2013 - Senate Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_119](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_119)
- SB125** OHIO CIVIL RIGHTS LAW EXPANSION (LAROSE F, SKINDELL M) To prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.  
Current Status: 6/26/2013 - Referred to Committee Senate Civil Justice  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_125](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_125)
- SB128** SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER REQUIREMENT (TAVARES C) To restrict a person's ability to require, solicit, mail, and publicly display social security numbers.  
Current Status: 6/26/2013 - Senate Commerce and Labor, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_128](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_128)
- SB157** EMPLOYMENT TAX CREDIT-CONVICTED INDIVIDUALS (TAVARES C) To create a tax credit for the employment of individuals who have been convicted of criminal offenses.  
Current Status: 7/11/2013 - Introduced  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_157](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_157)
- Healthcare*
- HB3** HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE (SEARS B, KUNZE S) To specify licensing and continuing education requirements for insurance agents involved in selling, soliciting, or negotiating sickness and accident insurance through a health benefit exchange.  
Current Status: 4/30/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 7/30/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_3](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_3)
- HB91** HEALTH CARE FREEDOM ACT (YOUNG R, THOMPSON A) To enact the Health Care Freedom Act.  
Current Status: 4/24/2013 - House Health and Aging, (Second Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_91](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_91)
- HB117** CAPTIVE INSURANCE COMPANIES (HACKETT R, STINZIANO M) To provide for the operation of captive insurance companies in Ohio.  
Current Status: 6/18/2013 - Referred to Committee Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_117](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_117)



## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

**HB121** OHIO HEALTH SECURITY ACT (HAGAN R, FOLEY M) To enact the Ohio Health Security Act to establish and operate the Ohio Health Care Plan to provide universal health care coverage to all Ohio residents.  
Current Status: 4/17/2013 - Referred to Committee House Insurance  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_121](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_121)

**HB125** MEDICAID EXPANSION (CARNEY J, ANTONIO N) To permit the Medicaid program to cover the eligibility expansion group authorized by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and to make an appropriation.  
Current Status: 4/17/2013 - Referred to Committee House Finance and Appropriations  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_125](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_125)

**SB9** INSURANCE AGENTS EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (BACON K) To specify licensing and continuing education requirements for insurance agents involved in selling, soliciting, or negotiating sickness and accident insurance through a health benefit exchange  
Current Status: 6/4/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 9/4/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_9](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_9)

**SB88** OHIO HEALTH BENEFIT EXCHANGE PROGRAM (SKINDELL M) To establish the Ohio Health Benefit Exchange Agency and to establish the Ohio Health Benefit Exchange Program consisting of an exchange for individual coverage and a Small Business Health Options Program.  
Current Status: 4/10/2013 - Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_88](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_88)

**SB104** OHIO HEALTH CARE PLAN (SKINDELL M) To establish and operate the Ohio Health Care Plan to provide universal health care coverage to all Ohio residents.  
Current Status: 4/16/2013 - Referred to Committee Senate Medicaid, Health and Human Services  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_104](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_104)

### *Labor Relations*

**HB151** RIGHT TO WORK-PRIVATE EMPLOYERS (ROEGNER K) To prohibit any requirement that employees of private employers join or pay dues to any employee organization and to establish civil and criminal penalties against employers who violate that prohibition.  
Current Status: 6/4/2013 - House Manufacturing and Workforce Development, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_151](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_151)

**HB152** RIGHT TO WORK-PUBLIC EMPLOYEES (MAAG R) To remove any requirement under the Public Employees Collective Bargaining Law that public employees join or pay dues to any employee organization.  
Current Status: 5/7/2013 - Referred to Committee House State and Local Government  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_152](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_152)



## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

**HJR5** RIGHT TO WORK (ROEGNER K, MAAG R) Proposing to enact Section 22 of Article I of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to prohibit employees from being forced to participate in a labor organization as a condition of employment.  
Current Status: 6/4/2013 - House Manufacturing and Workforce Development, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130\\_HJR\\_5](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=130_HJR_5)

### *Taxation*

**HB107** CAREER EXPLORATION INTERNSHIPS-TAX CREDIT (BAKER N) To authorize a tax credit for businesses that employ high school students in career exploration internships.  
Current Status: 6/12/2013 - House Ways and Means, (Second Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_107](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_107)

**HB230** TAX CREDIT-FOOD DONATIONS (GROSSMAN C, ANIELSKI M) To authorize an income tax or commercial activity tax credit for businesses that donate food inventory to charitable organizations.  
Current Status: 7/11/2013 - Introduced  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_230](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_230)

**SB89** EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (SKINDELL M) To grant a state earned income tax credit equal to a percentage of the federal earned income tax credit.  
Current Status: 6/11/2013 - Senate Ways and Means, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_89](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_89)

### *Unemployment Compensation*

**HB2** UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION CLAIMANT (DERICKSON T, BROWN T) To require an unemployment compensation claimant to register with OhioMeansJobs to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits and to require a claimant to contact a local one-stop office beginning with the eighth week of filing for unemployment.  
Current Status: 7/11/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 10/11/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_2](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_2)

**HB22** MILITARY SPOUSE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION (PILLICH C) To permit persons who quit work to accompany the person's spouse on a military transfer to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits.  
Current Status: 2/13/2013 - House Commerce, Labor and Technology, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_22](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_22)

**HB37** SHAREDWORK OHIO PROGRAM (DUFFEY M, SCHERER G) To create the SharedWork Ohio Program and to declare an emergency.  
Current Status: 7/11/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 7/11/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_37](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_37)



## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB55** UNEMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY-MILITARY SPOUSE (PILlich C, TERHAR L) To permit persons who quit work to accompany the person's spouse on a military transfer to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits.  
Current Status: 2/27/2013 - House Commerce, Labor and Technology, (Third Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_55](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_55)
- SB8** UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION BENEFITS-MILITARY SPOUSE (LAROSE F) To permit persons who quit work to accompany the person's spouse on a military transfer to be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits.  
Current Status: 6/26/2013 - PASSED BY SENATE; Bill Vote 32-0 Emergency Clause Vote 32-0  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_8](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_8)
- SB14** UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION LAW (KEARNEY E) To authorize programs and tax credits to encourage the hiring of unemployed individuals, to make changes to the Unemployment Compensation Law.  
Current Status: 2/13/2013 - Referred to Committee Senate Finance  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_14](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_14)
- SB25** SHARED WORK OHIO PROGRAM (PETERSON B, LAROSE F) To create the Shared Work Ohio Program and to declare an emergency.  
Current Status: 4/10/2013 - Referred to Committee House Commerce, Labor and Technology  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_25](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_25)
- Workers' Compensation**
- HB33** INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION BUDGET (HACKETT R) To make appropriations for the Industrial Commission for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2015, and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of Commission programs.  
Current Status: 3/26/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 3/26/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_33](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_33)
- HB34** WORKERS' COMPENSATION BUDGET (HACKETT R) To make appropriations for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2015; and to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of the Bureau's programs.  
Current Status: 3/26/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 3/26/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_34](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_34)
- HB143** WORKERS' COMPENSATION (DEVITIS A, BUTLER, JR. J) To require the Administrator of Workers' Compensation to include in the notice of premium rate that is applicable to an employer for an upcoming policy year the mathematical equation used by the Administrator to determine the employer's premium rate.  
Current Status: 5/14/2013 - House Insurance, (First Hearing)  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_143](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_143)





## SHRM LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

- HB1** OHIO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LAW (DERICKSON T, ROMANCHUK M) To require a local workforce investment area to use OhioMeansJobs as the local workforce investment area's job placement system, to rename county one-stop systems, and to make other changes to Ohio's Workforce Development Law.  
Current Status: 6/27/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 9/27/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_1](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_1)
- HB63** TAX CREDIT- OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION (CERA J, O'BRIEN S) To establish a nonrefundable commercial activity tax credit for companies involved in horizontal well drilling or related oil and gas production services that hire Ohio residents or dislocated workers.  
Current Status: 2/20/2013 - Referred to Committee House Ways and Means  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_63](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_63)
- SB1** OHIOMEANSJOBS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND (BEAGLE B, BALDERSON T) To create the OhioMeansJobs Workforce Development Revolving Loan Fund, to create the OhioMeansJobs Workforce Development Revolving Loan Program, to allocate a portion of casino license fees to finance the loan program, and to make an appropriation.  
Current Status: 7/11/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR; Eff. 10/11/2013  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_1](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_1)
- SB2** OHIO'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LAW (LEHNER P, BEAGLE B) To require a local workforce investment area to use OhioMeansJobs as the local workforce investment area's job placement system, to rename county one-stop systems, and to make other changes to Ohio's Workforce Development Law.  
Current Status: 4/10/2013 - Referred to Committee House Manufacturing and Workforce Development  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_SB\\_2](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_SB_2)
- Misc.*
- HB59** BIENNIAL BUDGET (AMSTUTZ R) To make operating appropriations for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, and ending June 30, 2015; to provide authorization and conditions for the operation of state programs.  
Current Status: 6/30/2013 - SIGNED BY GOVERNOR  
State Bill Page: [http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130\\_HB\\_59](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=130_HB_59)



## **OTHER NEWS IN STATE, LOCAL & FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

### *Federal*

#### ***Richard Cordray Confirmed to Lead Consumer Financial Protection Bureau***

On July 16, after two years of being caught in the middle of Washington's partisan warfare, Richard Cordray, former Ohio Attorney General, was confirmed as the director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). The CFPB was created by Dodd-Frank to police products such as mortgages and credit cards in response to complaints that consumers were being fleeced by lenders in the run-up to the 2008 financial crisis.

In mid-July, U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown announced his plan to introduce legislation meant to allow local educational, business and labor interests to have more say in how federal workforce funding is spent. Brown's Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act is designed to address the fact that Ohio and other areas of the U.S. have high unemployment even as large numbers of jobs go unfilled for lack of workers with the skills to perform them.

#### ***Portman Calls on President to Expand Affordable Care Delays***

U.S. Senator Rob Portman (R-OH) recently called on President Barack Obama to extend the delay on health care mandates for large employers to families and individual consumers, which he said are facing major cost increases in Ohio.

### *State*

#### ***Economic Development***

Finance Fund, a statewide nonprofit financial intermediary, will receive \$2 million in Ohio New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) out of a total of \$10 million in credits awarded to four Ohio-based community development entities (CDEs). Finance Fund said it will use the allocation, which is made by the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA), to drive at least \$5.1 million in economic investments in Ohio's struggling communities.

#### ***Home Sales Up 15-Plus Percent in June***

Ohio home sales are posting double digit gains against performance last year, according to the Ohio Association of Realtors (OAR). The 13,019 home sales in June represented a 15.5 percent increase over the 11,267 sales in June 2012. A similar increase of 15.8 percent was seen in sales for the first half of 2013 compared to 2012, with 61,297 sales in the former and 52,932 in the latter.

June's average price of \$161,498 is 7 percent higher than the average price of a year earlier, and the dollar volume for the month added up to \$2.1 billion, versus \$1.7 billion a year prior. Similar increases of 6.4 percent in average prices and 23.3 percent in dollar volume were seen when comparing January-June 2013 with the same period a year earlier.

#### ***Husted Announces June Business Filings***

Secretary of State Jon Husted announced that 7,185 new entities filed to do business in Ohio in June 2013. These numbers are down slightly compared to June 2012, in which 7,339 new entities filed with the secretary of state.

The secretary of state's office has assisted with 47,918 new business filings to date in 2013 (January-June). This is an increase from the same time period last year, in which there were 46,591 new business filings.



## **OTHER NEWS IN STATE, LOCAL & FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

### ***Insurance***

More than 6,000 Ohioans should get rebates totaling almost half a million dollars by Aug. 1 under insurance regulations stemming from the federal Affordable Care Act, the Obama administration announced in a recent report. The federal law sets a medical loss ratio rule stating that 80 percent of premiums must be spent on patient care and quality improvement. Spending more than 20 percent of premiums for other than those purposes triggers rebates to customers.

### ***Transportation***

The Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission recently adopted a number of resolutions implementing Gov. John Kasich's plan to bond against the toll road and use funds to pay for infrastructure projects in northern Ohio. The first resolution adopted a new schedule of toll rates that includes a 2.7 percent increase each year from 2014 to 2023, which the commission said "approximates the historical rate of inflation." Other resolutions were adopted that authorized the issuance of \$1.15 billion in Series A Turnpike Junior Lien Revenue Bonds, with \$70 million going towards replacing the original base of the turnpike.

In mid-July, the Ohio Rail Development Commission gave a boost to a Monroe County economic development project when it approved a \$100,000 grant and \$262,225 loan to upgrade tracks into an industrial development.

### ***Two State Health Agencies Merge***

The Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) and the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) officially consolidated into a single new agency on Monday, July 1. The newly formed agency is known as the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS). Heading up the new department is former Department of Mental Health Director Tracy Plouck.

### ***Workers' Compensation***

In late-July, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) answered claims that it overcharged employers not participating in its group discount program by \$859 million over eight years. The bureau is appealing the decision by the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court that has ordered reimbursement to members of the class action lawsuit first filed in 2011.

In addition, a coalition of business and labor interests including the AFL-CIO, Ohio Chamber of Commerce and National Federation of Independent Business-Ohio (NFIB) filed a friend-of-the-court brief, calling the suit an "unprecedented" attack on BWC's constitutionally mandated duties and saying it will jeopardize the viability of injury coverage for employers and workers alike.