



Ohio General Assembly 2024 Wrap Up

provided by Kevin Futryk of Government Advantage Group

As we noted many times last year, the 135th General Assembly, and 2024 in particular, was one of the least productive legislative sessions in over 52 years. There was much anticipation that the post-General Election Lame Duck Session would see a flurry of activity, but it started out rather slow, picking up only in the final days of the legislative session, with a marathon final day (Dec 18th) that began at 11:00 am and didn't end until just after 2:00 am on Dec 19th. In the end, dozens of bills moved between the two chambers, with one bill in particular, HB 315 (Township Law Revisions), picking up 42 other bills to become the Christmas Tree Bill of the 135th General Assembly. In the end, none of the bills that passed had an adverse impact on ACEC Ohio; in fact, SB 260, dealing with construction services that included our clarifying amendment that the bill's provisions didn't supersede QBS requirements, ultimately died. We were also engaged in several other bills near the end that contained proposed amendments and whether they impacted consulting engineers or not. In the end, none of these bills passed.

The other item in Lame Duck that drew a lot of attention was the election of the Speaker for the 136th General Assembly, a purported battle between Speaker Jason Stephens and Senate President Matt Huffman, who due to term limits was returning to the House. A week prior to the caucus vote, Speaker Stephens removed his name from consideration. This led to a flurry of rumors about other candidates challenging Huffman. The evening of the caucus vote, no other candidate emerged, and Matt Huffman emerged as the Speaker nominee in a unanimous vote that was over in less than 15 minutes.

The Leadership Team for the 136th General Assembly will be: House - Matt Huffman, Speaker; Gayle Manning, Speaker Pro-Tem; Phil Plummer, Ass't Speaker Pro-Tem; Marilyn John - Majority Floor Leader; Adam Bird - Ass't Majority Floor Leader; and in a change, there will be four Majority Whips: Riordan McLain, Steve Demetriou, Nick Santucci, and Josh Williams. Minority Leadership will be Allison Russo - Minority Leader; Dontavious Jarrells - Ass't Minority Leader; Dani Isaacson - Minority Whip; and Michelle

Grim - Ass't Minority Whip.

On the Senate side, there was much less drama, with heir apparent Sen. Rob McColley assuming the role of President of the Senate. Rounding out Senate Leadership are: Bill Reineke - President Pro-Tem; Theresa Gavarone - Majority Floor Leader; and George Lang - Minority Whip. Minority Leadership will be Nickie Antonio - Minority Leader; Hearcel Craig - Ass't Minority Leader; Kent Smith - Minority Whip; and Beth Liston - Ass't Minority Whip.

The 136th General Assembly officially convened on January 6th with the swearing in of all members, election of leadership teams, and passage of several Resolutions relative to the operations of the House & Senate. The next couple of weeks will focus on the organization of the House & Senate, announcement of committee rosters, and organizational meetings of the committees. Bill introduction will begin near the end of January, with the first 10 bills in each chamber being their priorities. The next major event will be the Governor's State of the State in mid-February, followed by the introduction of his Executive Budget Proposals. As we learn more about all of this, we will share it with you in a timely manner.

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