



### **Week of September 25, 2023**

#### **Senate considers property valuation bill, House action expected next week**

[Senate Bill \(SB\) 153](#), the companion to [House Bill \(HB\) 187](#), received proponent testimony this week, with only a handful of witnesses testifying in support. SB 153 would base the property valuation data for reappraisals and updates equally on the three most recent year's worth of data, rather than weighing the most recent year greater than others. This would effectively soften the significantly high property valuation increases seen across many of the counties [undergoing update or reappraisal this year](#).

Meanwhile, the House is expected to use its "if-needed" session date next Tuesday, Oct. 3 to pass HB 187. Lawmakers are expected to amend the bill on the floor to include an emergency clause, making it go into effect immediately upon the governor's signature, rather than 91 days after that action.

SB 153 does not include a provision contained in HB 187 that would permanently revise the process regarding the determination of final property values for updates and reappraisals. Under current law, the state Tax Commissioner reviews county auditors' updated values for updates and reappraisals, and if they determine necessary, orders adjustments to those values.

HB 187 would flip that process, giving county auditors the final authority in establishing values and allowing the Tax Commissioner to merely recommend a change or appeal an auditor's decision or indecision to the Board of Tax Appeals. This change is supported by county auditors and could pose problems with financial planning and tax uniformity issues for schools and local governments.

#### **Report card and state test data reviewed**

The Senate Education Committee heard testimony this week from Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction **Chris Woolard** on the State Report Card and from Dr. **Vladimir Kogan** from Ohio State University on 2022-23 state test data. A copy of Woolard's presentation is [accessible here](#) copy of Kogan's presentation is [accessible here](#).

#### **NTSB speaks with School Bus Safety Working Group**

Dr. **Kristin Poland** of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) spoke this week to members of the Ohio School Bus Safety Working Group, outlining NTSB's recommendations to install seat belts on school buses. A copy of NTSB's presentation is [accessible here](#).

#### **Ohio Redistricting Commission adopts legislative maps**

In a bipartisan vote, the Ohio Redistricting Commission this week approved the use of House and Senate legislative maps. The House and Senate maps, [which are accessible here](#), are in effect for the next eight years. Under the maps, 61 of the 99 House seats are solidly Republican, with 11 tossup seats. 23 of the 33 Senate seats are solidly Republican, with four tossup seats. The current composition of the House is

67 Republicans, 32 Democrats, and the composition of the Senate is 26 Republicans and seven Democrats.

#### **On Tap – Active Bills Next Week**

- [HB 187](#) – Property tax reappraisal/update process - possible House vote on October 3
- [HB 78](#) (fifth hearing) – STRS elections and membership – possible vote in the House Pensions Committee
- [HB 140](#) (first hearing) – Penalties and law change regarding passing school buses – sponsor testimony in the House Transportation Committee
- [HB 263](#) (first hearing) - Property tax freeze for seniors – sponsor testimony in House Ways and Means Committee
- [HB 219](#) (first hearing) - College Credit Plus – sponsor testimony in the House Higher Education Committee
- [HB 183](#) (first hearing) - Single-Sex Bathrooms – sponsor testimony in the House Higher Education.

The Senate Education Committee and the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee will not meet next week.

#### **Heard around the Statehouse**

“Ultimately, (the Department of Education and Workforce transition) is going to pass. Gov. DeWine supports it. Most of the Legislature supports it.” - Senate President **Matt Huffman**, speaking to reporters about the legal challenge to the creation of the education agency, which was halted under a 14-day temporary restraining order. A preliminary injunction hearing is scheduled for Oct. 2.

“Ohio is not a great place for an older resident to age in, and depending where you're at in your budget, you really don't get much of a benefit.” - Franklin County Auditor **Michael Stinziano**, [speaking to the Columbus Dispatch](#) about the challenges of rising property values and property tax laws in Ohio.