

Politics Notebook: Group Maps Funding Cuts; Sierra Club Thanks Obama; Cannabis Amendment Filed

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Progressive think tank Innovation Ohio posted an analysis its website Thursday that the group said estimates how many dollars each county has lost because of the policies of the Kasich Administration.

The [interactive map](#) considers funding losses because of changes in school funding, local government fund revenues, the elimination of the estate tax and tangible personal property tax reimbursements, the group said.

"When Gov. Kasich boasts about balancing the state budget without raising taxes, he always forgets to mention that it came at a terrible cost for schools, local governments, and all Ohioans who depend on these services," IO President Janetta King said in a release. "The interactive map we've posted on our website allows local taxpayers to see just how steep those costs really are and how heavy a burden their governor has given them."

IO said balancing the budget required sacrifice but that the Republican-supported bill ([HB 153](#)) did not share that sacrifice, instead placing a burden on public workers and the middle class.

"If you don't know how damaging the Kasich Administration's policies have been to you and your county, find out by going to the Innovation Ohio website. But take a deep breath before you do," Ms. King said.

Thank-You Ad: The Sierra Club released [a television ad](#) in the Cleveland, Cincinnati and Columbus media markets Thursday that thanks President Barack Obama for protecting Americans from toxic pollution.

The ad follows the president's actions to "prevent dirty air pollution from blowing across state lines" and follows a previous ad that aired in Ohio markets in December celebrating the Obama Administration's protections against toxic mercury.

The ad, titled "It's that Simple," goes on air as some members of Congress threaten to roll back and even permanently weaken toxic pollution protections, the Sierra Club said.

"The vast majority of Americans support the Environmental Protection Agency's work to keep their air and water clean and hold polluters accountable," Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune said. "Any member of Congress who disputes that must explain to American mothers, fathers and children why they want to put polluter profits ahead of Americans' safety and health."

The ad will be broadcast in high saturation in the markets through Jan. 17 making it the biggest ad buy that the Sierra Club has done in recent history. The 750-point buy in each Ohio media market means that the average TV viewer in the Cleveland, Cincinnati and Columbus metro areas will see the ad at least eight times in less than a week, the organization said.

Cannabis Amendment: Proponents of legalizing medical marijuana filed an [initiative petition](#) with the attorney general's office Thursday seeking to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

The more than 1,000 signatures filed by Theresa Gray and Mary Jane Borden support the "Ohio Medical Cannabis" amendment that would add a section to Article XV of the state constitution and would allow for medical use of cannabis.

The same individuals were behind another medical marijuana amendment [rejected by the AG](#) last fall because the summary language was not deemed a fair representation of the amendment.

It would allow residents age 18 or older who have been diagnosed with a "debilitating medical condition" to use, possess, produce and acquire medical marijuana in amount sufficient to meet their medical needs "and alleviate their suffering," according to the summary language submitted by the petitioners.

Eligible medical conditions include glaucoma, HIV/AIDS, cancer and Crohn's disease, in addition to symptoms of severe or chronic pain or nausea. The amendment also allows eligible residents to possess drug paraphernalia and to access goods and service to enable their use of the substance.

The proposed ballot issue would also establish the Ohio Commission of Cannabis Control to license, regulate and control the substance in Ohio. Individuals and organizations would also be permitted to grow and distribute cannabis in its various forms according to rules established by the commission.

The AG has until Jan. 23 to take action on the validity of the petitions and make a determination on the summary language.

- See more at: http://www.gongwer-oh.com/programming/news.cfm?article_ID=810080205#sthash.wFK1vesT.dpuf

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