

OACTE, OAPCTE, SUED Legislative Update

January 17, 2025

The 136th General Assembly on January 6 was officially convened, marking the beginning of a new, two-year legislative term. Both the Senate and the House finalized their leadership selections and committee chairs, setting the stage for the legislative priorities ahead. Gov. Mike DeWine's final budget proposal as governor is due to the legislature on February 3 but is expected to be released sometime in the week prior.

Senate Leadership

The Ohio Senate announced its new leadership team:

- President: Rob McColley (R)
- President Pro Tempore: Bill Reineke (R)
- Majority Floor Leader: Theresa Gavarone (R)
- Majority Whip: George Lang (R)
- Minority Leader: Nickie Antonio (D)
- Assistant Minority Floor Leader: Hearcel Craig (D)
- Minority Floor Leader: Kent Smith (D)
- Minority Whip: Beth Liston (D)

House Leadership

The Ohio House leadership roster includes:

- Speaker: Matt Huffman (R)
- Speaker Pro Tempore: Gayle Manning (R)
- Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore: Phil Plummer (R)
- Majority Floor Leader: Marilyn John (R)
- Assistant Majority Floor Leader: Adam Bird (R)
- Majority Whips: Nick Santucci (R), Steve Demetriou (R), Josh Williams (R), Riordan McClain (R)
- Minority Leader: Allison Russo (D)
- Assistant Minority Leader: Dontavius Jarrells (D)
- Minority Whip: Dani Isaacsohn (D)
- Assistant Minority Whip: Michele Grim (D)

Committee Leadership

The following committee chairs have been selected:

- **House Finance Committee:** Brian Stewart (R)
- **Senate Finance Committee:** Jerry Cirino (R)

- **House Workforce and Higher Education Committee:** Tom Young (R)
 - Other Republican members include Kevin Ritter (vice chair), Mike Dovilla, Marilyn John, Gayle Manning, Tracy Richardson, Nick Santucci, Josh Williams, and Heidi Workman. Democrat members have yet to be announced.
- **Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee:** Kristina Roegner (R)
 - Other members include vice chair Jerry Cirino (R), Kyle Koehler (R), Bill Reineke (R), Cathy Ingram (D), and Casey Weinstein (D)
- **House Education Committee:** Sarah Fowler Arthur (R)
 - Other Republican members include Mike Odioso (vice chair), Adam Bird, Gary Click, Don Jones, Gayle Manning, Jonathan Newman, Kevin Ritter, and Jim Thomas. Democrat members have yet to be announced.
- **Senate Education Committee:** Andrew Brenner (R)
 - Other members include vice chair Bill Blessing (R), Al Cutrona (R), Steve Huffman (R), Kyle Koehler (R), Cathy Ingram (D), and Kent Smith (D).

Senate Bill 83 slated to return as Senate priority

Now-Senate Finance Chairman Jerry Cirino plans to reintroduce a revised version of his higher education reform legislation, possibly as Senate Bill 1. News reports indicate the new version will largely align with the House committee-passed version, with one key exception: the potential reinstatement of a provision banning strikes by university employees.

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education welcomed nine new members and held elections for leadership positions. Paul LaRue was re-elected as president with an 11-7 vote, defeating Tom Jackson. Teresa Fedor was elected as vice president, prevailing over John Hagan and Charlotte McGuire. LaRue's priorities for the coming year include addressing funding issues and streamlining the board's licensure process.

Other Activities

- **Legislative Retreats:** House and Senate lawmakers held retreats during the week of January 13 to discuss caucus priorities and deepen their understanding of policy and funding issues.
- **House Session:** The House is scheduled to meet on January 22, primarily to adopt the rules for the chamber.