

14th Ohio House District

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**133rd General Assembly**

Commerce and Labor
Finance
Ranking Member, Finance Subcommittee
on Higher Education
Insurance

Bride Rose Sweeney **State Representative**

Recap of Governor DeWine's Press Conference on September 10, 2020

Headlines:

- Announcing Dr. Joan Duwve as new Health Director who previously worked for Governors McMaster (R-SC), Daniels (R-IN), and Pence (R-IN).
- Ohioans should begin to get their flu shot as soon as possible.
- 69.5% of all Ohioans have completed the census (national 65.5%)
- Six counties continue to be red (down from 7 last week).
- Ten CDC "High Incidence Counties" (100 cases per 100,000 over two weeks).
- Ohio's initial jobless claims fell by 4%, 12,178 fewer Ohioans seeking unemployment benefits.
- DeWine clarifies that the public reporting element of the k-12 health order is optional for school districts.
- DeWine again calls for the legislature to act on his gun safety package, saying "I don't know who would be against this".

Numbers:

- 4,064 confirmed deaths: 30 new, up from 25 reported yesterday
- 4,354 total deaths: 290 probables
- 127,106 confirmed cases: 1060 new, up from 902 new yesterday
- 134,086 total cases: 6,980 probables
- 682 in hospitals (down from 700 yesterday; 3% of total)
- 231 in ICU (up from 230; 5.48% of total)
- 137 on ventilators (down from 141; 2.68% of total)
- Total tests 2,483,371; 19,726 new, down from 23,505 yesterday
- Positivity rate 4.4%; 7-day moving average 4.3%

DeWine (Mike and Fran):

- Ohioans need to get their flu vaccines as soon as they can.
- Area Agencies on Aging can help older Ohioans receive transport to get the flu shot. Can be reached at 1-866-243-5678.
- Ohiofoodbanks.org/coronavirus provided as a resource to both volunteer and receive aid.
- Alabama, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Kansas are on travel advisory list (have 15% positivity rate and above).
- 20-29 age group continue to be the largest group of infected individuals (followed by 0-19).

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- 70-79 most likely age group to be hospitalized at about 30% rate of hospitalization (followed by 80+)
- 68 counties held steady, 9 dropped from orange to yellow, 6 total red counties (7 last week (Lucas)).
- Wayne, Preble, Putnam, Montgomery, Mercer, and Butler counties are the red counties.
- Ten CDC “High Incidence Counties” which are over 100 cases per 100,000 over two weeks.
- Announcing Dr. Joan Duwve as new Health Director (previously worked for Governors McMaster (R-SC), Daniels (R-IN), and Pence (R-IN)).

Guests:

- *Lori Chris, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services*
 - Highlighting Suicide Prevention Day.
 - Men are 4x more likely to die by suicide.
 - Ohio Care Line: 1-800-720-9616
 - Talking to someone about suicide doesn’t increase their chances of dying by suicide.
 - Important to understand risk factors and signs of suicide ideation.
 - Loneliness, excessive alcohol and drug use, recklessness, calling to say “goodbye”, withdrawing from loved ones, giving away possessions.
- *Michael Frandsen, President, Wittenberg University*
 - Doing internal contact tracing.
 - Conducted broad testing on campus yesterday.

Husted:

- 69.5% of all Ohioans have completed the census (national 65.5%).
- Ohio’s initial jobless claims fell by 4%, 12,178 fewer people all told seeking unemployment.
- 150,000 jobs available at ohiomeansjobs.com.

Questions:

(Geoff Redick, WSYX Columbus) Knowing that young people are driving the spike in illness, are we going to target them and not the larger population in Franklin County?

No, it is not a surprise at all that it is young people that are driving increases in Franklin County. Young people can get sick, can go to the hospital, but it is certainly less likely when you are young. Keeping students at college, and not sending them home frequently, is key to preventing spread elsewhere in the state.

(Jackie Borchardt, Cincinnati Enquirer) Will Ohio get antigen tests? Is there an update on optional reporting to the public from k-12 schools?

We are continuing to acquire all sorts of tests, with an emphasis on less invasive tests. They will be targeted towards schools and nursing homes. DeWine will report back on Tuesday with more information. There is a concern over the schools being too burdened by mandating that they have to report to the public. While it is important for the public and the media to know, it is more important for parents in the school to know. Many districts are worried about looking bad by reporting their data out to the public. DeWine says we should not stigmatize rate of infection.

(Jack Windsor, WFMD) A NYT article examining testing data from Massachusetts, Nevada, and New York says that up to 90% of virus tests have been picking up dead virus fragments that is weeks old. That would mean that instead of 15,000-20,000 tests in Ohio, we would have 1,500.-2,000. Should we have plans to start tracking viral load data? Are we improperly quarantining people based on old science? Can we also get an update on Ohio's anti-body program?

The anti-body testing program is still awaiting final results. If Ohio had a perfectly precise measurement of the virus, you can probably determine exact time of a patient being contagious, but we are just not to that point yet. DeWine will continue to defer to doctors. Husted adds, that the final report should be released by next week.

(Max Filby, Columbus Dispatch) Given that symptoms of the flu and COVID-19 are similar, if more people get the flu vaccine, will that help us avoid lockdown?

DeWine believes that this is an interesting point. He adds that doctors have advised that having both the flu and COVID-19 at the same time would be incredibly bad. We do not yet know for certain, but some countries in the Southern Hemisphere have had lighter flu seasons because people are taking more precautions than normal.

(Jake Zuckerman, Ohio Capitol Journal) In interview with Bob Woodward in March, President Trump talked about how deadly the virus is and said that he "always wanted to play it down". This contrasts with his public statements on COVID-19 calling it a Democrat Hoax. Do you think the President misled the public?

DeWine says that Bob Woodward is a respected journalist. He says all that he can speak to is his work with the administration. Says that Trump took early actions, such as shutting down travel. DeWine adds that he takes the President at his word when he said he didn't want to alarm people. The Vice President is usually on the calls. Sometimes the President is. DeWine adds that he has had a good, business-like relationship with the White House. He says that whatever he has asked Trump to do, he has tried to do.

(Alex Ebert, Bloomberg) Governor Whitmer said that the greatest threat to America is the disinformation that President Trump has been giving the American people about the virus since January. In those interviews with Bob Woodward, Trump indicates that he is downplaying the virus, he has called it a fraud and a hoax. How does this impact the people of Ohio?

DeWine will let the people of Ohio decide that. DeWine says he has been accused of being about doom and gloom. We will continue to learn about the virus, and hindsight is useful when examining response, but the science continues to evolve. DeWine cites the evolution of the science on the efficacy of masks.

(Adrienne Robbins, WCMH Columbus) Recreational senior centers are confused as if they need to follow the policies for adult daycares and long-term senior centers. Can you clarify that policy?

DeWine indicates that the Director of Aging will be joining his press conference next week and he will have her clarify at that point. Adds that senior centers are important for mental health.

(Justin Dennis, Mahoning Matters) We have heard from local officials that have said that the state has been slow to distribute CARES Act funding and that the Oct. 6th deadline is coming up rapidly. Do you feel the state has given the localities enough time to work with this funding? What has been the state's process for distributing those funds? Also, when will the next distribution of funds be and will it be tied to the Oct. 6th deadline?

The legislature has passed a bill to get additional money out. DeWine believes all this money should go to local communities. Ultimately, they must follow what the federal government wants them to do. OBM has tried to help localities to figure out those regulations. DeWine continues to ask Senators Brown and Portman for more flexibility.

(Ben Schwartz, WCPO Cincinnati) Do you have follow-up on the Cincinnati Police Chief's ask that the 10 PM bar closure restriction be lifted? I know after consulting with lawyers, you found that it wasn't possible to carve Cincinnati out specifically, but have you considered working with the city in anyway further to solve the problem?

DeWine confirms that he cannot legally carve out Cincinnati alone. Some mayors do want a change statewide, but others really do want the 10 PM restriction. DeWine says that what the legislature can do is pass his administration's gun bill to get illegal guns out of the hands of individuals who should not be owning them in the first place. Says "I don't know who would be against this".

(John Reed, Gongwer News) We are seeing spikes in college towns as students return. How much of that is the actions of students, and how much is a broad based population surveillance test of people who may be asymptomatic?

DeWine thinks that is likely a combination of both. College students socialize, and if they don't do it carefully, it can create cases very quickly. The burden that students and college's carry is to convince people that the only way to have an on-campus experience. It is also correct that if campuses weren't testing, we wouldn't have a good sense of how many cases there are.

(Danny Eldridge, Hanna News Service) What are your thoughts on the prospects of Ohio State suing the Big Ten for the Football season being cancelled?

It will be up to the Big Ten. Ohio State wants to play. The President (of Ohio State) wants to play. Their argument makes sense. Because they are testing and the built-in incentive to play, they can be safe and conduct football operations.

(Andy Chow, Ohio Public Radio) What kind of expectation do you have for Dr. Duwve when she starts? How useful will it be to have a full-time director, and are you worried about any pushback from the Senate when it comes to approving the appointment?

DeWine says that he has high expectations given that we are in the middle of a pandemic. Lance Himes has done a very good job, but it is always better to have a permanent director. It will be useful to have a director with a deep knowledge of public

health. She is already on the calls for COVID-19 in her capacity as Director in South Carolina. DeWine will let the Senate decide her confirmation, but he let President Obhof and the Speaker know of the nomination.

(Jim Otte, Toledo Blade) Can you address the frustrations that are bouncing around the legislature among your conservative friends who are saying you continue to move the goal posts further and further down the road? When are you going to lift the last restrictions and what are your goals?

DeWine knows that this is on people's minds. This is a fight that we are in. We cannot let the virus off the floor. We have got it down. If we took off mask orders tomorrow, we would have a huge resurgence. It would be a disservice to the state. There is as much spread now as there has ever been. It would not be a wise time to let up. The sacrifices that we have made have been for our freedom to move about freely. We are not going to keep restrictions one second longer than we have to, but we cannot signal that this is over when it is not.

