

# LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

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## **DECEMBER 9, 2020 REPORT #18**

### ***LAME DUCK LUNACY***

Lunacy is about as nice as we can put it. As you may know, a lame duck session is when the 'lame ducks" return to session after the general election. Perhaps, events are even a bit crazier this year. The covid-19 situation has spawned a few crazy legislative introductions and actions, not to mention the filing articles of impeachment against the Governor by members of his own party.

Nonetheless, after canceling session dates as members of the general assembly have tested positive for covid, committee hearings continue with about 100 or more bills being considered in different committees. It's okay to ask why all these bills were not considered the previous 23 months? The answer: well, that's how things sometimes work.

Of note to us is SB 212, a well-intended effort by Senator Kirk Schuring to provide relief intended by an earlier measure by Rep Derrek Merrin to encourage increasing the supply of housing through increased lot development. While the earlier measure passed the legislature, the Governor vetoed it.

SB 212 would authorize local government to provide property tax relief for housing construction for both single and multi-family development. The bill, mind you, is permissive but, nonetheless, has been met with a barrage of opposition by county commissioners, county auditors, school boards and a no growth group, misnamed Greater Ohio. Essentially, they all want to discourage any growth in housing, unless it is in their best interests to support such growth. Ways and Means Chair Merrin tried to explain to them the simple reality: you can not build a new building unless there is first, a developed lot to build it on.

That fact belies the intent of the opponents to effectively eliminate any chance of encouraging the development of housing.

Future hearings on SB 212 and many other bills may continue through the end of the month.