



## **Ohio Lt. Gov.: State budget is jobs-friendly, but Obamacare effect is a concern**

ZANESVILLE — Ohio Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor said the state’s biennial budget signed into law by Gov. John Kasich this week puts the state on a firm path to business stability and growth, despite concerns with how federal health insurance reforms will be implemented.

“Since we came into office in January 2011, the state has created 170,000 jobs, and in May created more jobs (32,100) than any other state in the country, and our goal is to certainly stay on that path,” Taylor said during a visit Wednesday to Zanesville. “It would be easy to settle in and relax now that the budget is passed, with a sense of accomplishment, but there is still more work to do.”

That includes looking at how a state economy that is adding jobs will be affected by provisions in the federal Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare.

Taylor said the announcement this week that a key provision of the health care law, the employer mandate for companies with more than 50 employees, will be delayed for a year is another indication of “how problematic this (law) is, and any relief from it is positive.”

But she cautioned individuals buying insurance on their own still must comply with the new law beginning next year or face fines.

“It’s a welcome delay, but businesses are still looking at what the short-term and long-term impacts will be,” she said. “We’ve got the wind in our face from Washington, with overly burdensome regulations. But we’re going to keep doing what we need to do to improve the business climate here in Ohio by pushing back and sharing those concerns with legislators.”

Taylor said the Ohio Department of Insurance is reviewing the new insurance plans to be sold in Ohio — 14 companies submitted 214 plans. The initial analysis is that the cost of coverage will increase 88 percent over current levels and state officials expect increases in premiums will fall along the same lines, she said.

Overall, Taylor said the new budget worked out by the Ohio General Assembly, which includes investments in school funding and tax breaks for small businesses and working families, will help bolster the business climate and make it easier to create jobs.

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