

BULLETIN

January 22, 1992

"Lawyers Full Employment Act" sent to Legislature

California-styled Prop 65 law sought by interest group

A California-styled Proposition 65 proposal was recently certified by Secretary of State Bob Taft and forwarded on to the Statehouse for consideration by the Legislature for possible enactment into law.

The bill, which would be economically burdensome to business and unnecessarily disturbing to consumers, has been referred to as "the lawyers full employment act" by Statehouse insiders due to a bounty hunter clause within the bill. The bounty hunter language would declare open season on businesses by rewarding anyone for turning in businesses thought to be in violation of its obtrusive standards. Under the Ohio Constitution, the Legislature has 120 days to act on initiated legislation.

The bill is being pushed by Ohio Citizen Action, formerly known as Ohio Public Interest Campaign (OPIC).

Among other things, the bill would require warning labels to be placed on any product which contains even trace elements of one or more chemicals compiled on a master list. The list currently contains 458 chemicals which the Citizen Action deems undesirable.

Under the proposal, local governments would be responsible for prosecuting violators in civil or criminal courts, but not compensated for the costs.

In order to combat the proposal, the Ohio Consumer Information and Safety Council was formed (OCISC). The primary goal of the OCISC is to help educate the consuming public as to the dangers of such a law. Secondly, the OCISC will help members of the Ohio General Assembly to understand the harsh economic impact that this bill would impose on Ohio's businesses and consumers.

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