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## **Governor Signs Two Bills into Law**

Gov. John Kasich Tuesday signed the following two bills into law:

- **HB353** (Reineke) which expands exemptions to Ohio's Unclaimed Funds Law to include open-loop cards (i.e. pre-paid Mastercard or Visa). Current law already exempts most closed-loop cards (i.e. merchant gift cards, gift certificates).
- **HB405** (Perales) which creates the criminal offense of counterfeiting, prohibiting certain conduct involving counterfeited currency, other securities, or debit or credit cards.

Both bills become effective in 90 days.

Regarding HB405, Rep. Rick Perales (R-Beavercreek) said in a release that it generally classifies counterfeiting as a fourth-degree felony, with the potential for harsher penalties based on the overall counterfeit value or the number of debit or credit cards involved.

"HB405 will give Ohio's law enforcement entities the tools necessary to support our colleagues in the U.S. Secret Service by holding counterfeiters accountable, and safeguarding Ohio's economy and citizens who may be adversely impacted by this corrupt activity," Perales said.

"Ohio has opened a new offensive against the opioid epidemic. This legislation sets a national standard for others to emulate."

He went on to explain that, "Especially in recent years, counterfeiting has become a major component of the underground economy fueling the heroin and opioid epidemic. During House committee testimony, U.S. Secret Service Agent Kevin Dye estimated that more than 85 percent of counterfeiting investigations in Dayton are tied to illicit drug activity."

Perales said HB405 is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, the Association of Chiefs of Police, the Buckeye Sheriffs' Association and the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association.

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Ohio News Wire | The Complete Statehouse | State Health Clips  
21 West Broad Street, Suite 1000 (10th Floor) Columbus, OH 43215  
614.227.5820 phone - 614.228.5897 fax

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