

June 13, 2012

GOP enters summer with proof of bipartisanship

By Marc Kovac, Capital Bureau Chief

Columbus -- Gov. John Kasich and the Republican leaders of the Ohio House and Senate took a much-deserved victory lap last week to mark the completion of a spring session to beat all spring sessions.

Last year was busy. This year could be called grueling. And Kasich says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," when it comes to what's next on his agenda.

"We're going to continue to push and shove and reduce the cost of doing business, help job creators, reward taxpayers," he told reporters last week.

Kasich & Co. have a lengthy list of legislative accomplishments -- exotic animals, human trafficking, fracking, third-grade reading guarantee, video slots at racetracks, Cleveland schools reform -- not to mention a major budget bill and other mid-biennium review policy changes.

And most of the major bills passed with Democratic support. Republicans even managed a couple of minority party votes on legislation limiting water used from Lake Erie and its watershed -- a bill that most Democrats railed against.

Democrats are appearing at bill signings and dotting the "i" in Kasich's name. They're laughing at the governor's jokes. A couple have given him hugs in public.

That's quite a contrast from a year ago, when minority party members were up in arms over Senate Bill 5, election reform, the coming redistricting process and other issues.

The narrative going into the summer campaign season for Kasich and GOP leaders is that the culture in Columbus has changed. The two parties have found ways to work together for the good of the people. At a time when the folks in Washington, D.C., can't agree on whether it's night or day, Republicans and Democrats in Ohio are putting aside their differences and focusing on what matters.

Article continued here: <http://www.the-news-leader.com/news/article/5197946>

###