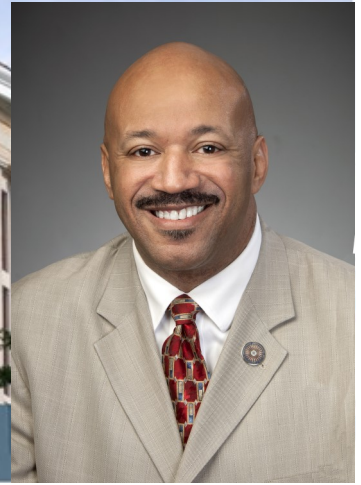




A legislative update from
STATE REP. THOMAS WEST
HOUSE DISTRICT 49



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From the desk of Rep. West

Dear Neighbor,

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court’s conservative majority struck down *Roe v. Wade*. It’s troubling to imagine women in the United States not having the freedom to control their own bodies or make decisions about their own health care.

As Americans, we know people should have the fundamental freedom to make decisions about their own bodies and health care. This ruling takes that freedom away, and lets partisan politicians decide if women have the right to control their own bodies.

[Over 60% of Ohioans](#) agree with the *Roe v. Wade* decision to allow access to abortion. Despite this, the same day it was overturned, a Republican law banning abortion after six weeks, a point when many women don’t even know they are pregnant, officially took effect in Ohio.

Democrats are continuing to protect women’s freedom to access the health care they need, including abortion. House and Senate Democrats have proposed an [amendment](#) to Ohio’s Constitution that would ensure all people have the freedom to make decisions about their bodies and health care.

Americans have spent 50 years fighting for this right, and we are not giving up now.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,

Thomas West

State Representative & Assistant Minority Leader



Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to bring awareness to the importance of mental health access for Black and brown Ohioans. There are often barriers and stigmas that accompany minority mental health, and we must work to dismantle these and make health care more accessible for all.

Visit the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to learn more.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255

Department of Mental Health and Addiction:

Ohio Care Line: 1-800-720-9616



Taxation: www.tax.ohio.gov

Form Requests 800-282-1782

Taxpayer Assistance 800-282-1780

Jobs and Family Services: www.jfs.ohio.gov

Veteran Services 888-296-7541

Unemployment 877-644-6562

Public Safety: www.publicsafety.ohio.gov

Highway Patrol 877-7-PATROL

DUI Hotline 800-GRAB-DUI

Aging: www.aging.ohio.gov

Golden Buckeye Card 866-301-6446

Elder Rights Unit 800-282-1206



Democrats still working to protect women and support families

Democrats have introduced a plan to protect women's health care and support babies and families. Due to reproductive freedom being almost completely stripped away in Ohio, it is more important than ever to ensure we are protecting women and supporting our families.

Ohio Republicans continue to prioritize legislation that endangers women's health, such as bills like [House Bill 598](#) and [Senate Bill 123](#). These current pieces of legislation would completely ban abortion in Ohio without any exceptions for rape, incest or to protect the health of the mother.

Democrats know that people deserve the freedom to make their own decisions about their bodies. In addition to ensuring that women of Ohio have the freedom to make their own health care decisions, Democrats have introduced a comprehensive legislative plan that invests in families from the very beginning and ensures all babies have the resources they need to grow and thrive.

The legislative package includes bills to:

- Eliminate the diaper tax;
- Create the Infant Formula Tax Credit;
- Establish the Ohio Safe Sleep and Baby Box Program;
- Require insurance coverage of medically necessary donor human milk;
- Create the Infant Nutrition Protection Act;
- Enact the Ohio Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.



House and Senate Democrats have also proposed an [amendment](#) to Ohio's Constitution that would ensure all people have the freedom to make decisions about their bodies and health care.



Heat wave highlights need for utility transparency



As the weather warms up and Ohio feels the effects of climate change, it is more important than ever to ensure that the state is prepped for a

development initiative in recent history by prioritizing clean energy jobs and environmental justice programs;

- Center equitable policy design to ensure clean energy benefits go to those most historically and disproportionately harmed by Ohio's regressive energy policies;
- Move Ohio towards a more equitable clean energy future by encouraging clean energy growth, energy waste reduction and curbing utility influence over policymaking and regulatory actions.

future of clean and sustainable energy sources.

You deserve transparency from the people you pay your bills to, especially when health, safety and essential services are on the line and extreme circumstances are at play. Our energy grid must be modernized and well prepared for major weather events to ensure consumer security.

Democrats have introduced legislation to help with this effort such as:

- **House Bill (HB) 429. Energy Jobs & Justice Act will:**
 - Launch the state's largest economic

- **HB 389 will:**

- Reduce waste and save consumers money;
- Give utilities an avenue to design and implement energy saving programs, such as installation of smart thermostats, putting in less wasteful HVAC systems, and recycling old appliances.