

Statehouse News

From the Office of State Representative *Bride Rose Sweeney*

August 19, 2021



A Note from Rep. Sweeney

Dear Friend,

I hope that you and your family are well and have been enjoying the warm weather! With summer in full swing in our community, we've caught a glimpse of what a post-pandemic world might look like. Unfortunately, the Delta variant is extremely contagious and makes it even more important to get vaccinated to protect ourselves and others. For Frequently Asked Questions about the vaccine which is scientifically-proven to be safe and effective, click [HERE](#). To schedule a vaccine appointment so that we can move forward together, click [HERE](#).

After decades of work and an outpouring of public support that culminated in my House Bill 1, the Fair School Funding Plan became law in the state budget. For the first time in our history, Ohio will fund its schools based on the actual cost to educate a child, the unique needs of each district, and the capacity of every community to pay its share of those costs. Four times since 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that our previous system for funding schools was unconstitutional and required a "complete, systematic overhaul." The Fair School Funding Plan moves us away from this fundamentally broken path, allowing us to chart a new course for future generations.

It has been an honor to lead the effort to pass my bipartisan House Bill 1 – a historic, data-driven and long-overdue school funding solution. Once it's fully funded, I am confident this new plan will be fair for communities, taxpayers, and most importantly fair for students. While this becoming law is a monumental leap forward, there is still a long journey ahead to ensure a quality education for every Ohio child no matter where they live or what their parents make. Continued public support is essential to fully funding the plan as it is currently only partially funded. We need your support – for more information, contact my office!

In addition to fighting for fair school funding, I have been working to ensure fair representation for Ohioans as the redistricting process gets underway. Every critical issue in our state comes down to fair districts, from education and the economy to growing good paying jobs and protecting healthcare access. Without fair maps, real progress and truly responsive government is impossible. Ohio is one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation, with politicians to picking their voters instead of the other way around. In 2015 and 2018, Ohioans overwhelmingly backed redistricting reforms and demanded a fair, transparent, bipartisan process with public input. Public hearings of the Redistricting Commission are a key part of that process, because a map that works for everyone listens to everyone. The schedule can be found [HERE](#). I will do everything in my power to live up to the spirit of the redistricting reforms and I encourage everyone to get involved!

While the House went into recess last month, my office is still very busy helping constituents every day; please don't be afraid to call anytime we might be of assistance to you. I will also be hosting a virtual town hall on Monday, August 23 from 6-7 pm. Please use this [LINK](#) to join (feel free to add it to your calendar), I would love to see you there! Read on to learn about the new overpayment waiver process from ODJFS, the Expanded Child Tax Credit, which is a massive tax cut for working families, and more!

All the best,

Bride

Bride Rose Sweeney
State Representative



Legislative News

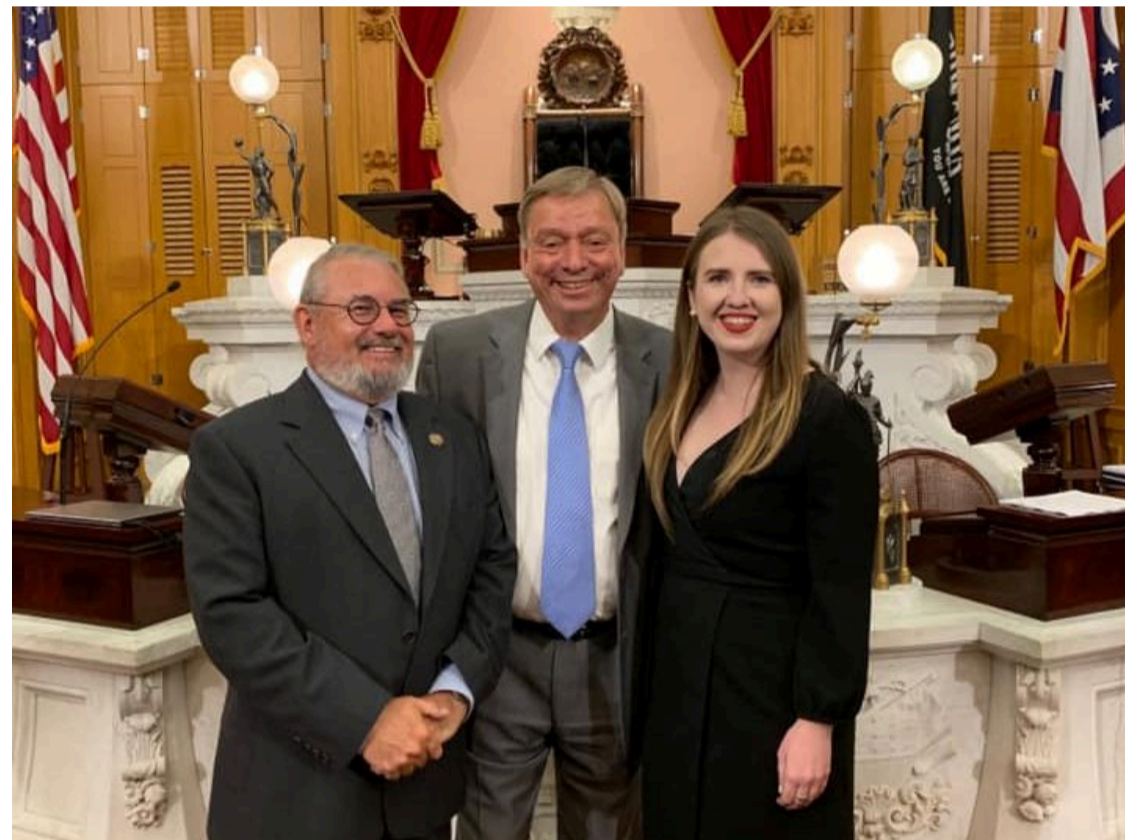


Photo: Rep. Sweeney (right) with former Rep. Patterson (center) and Rep. Callender (left). These bipartisan legislators worked together to deliver for Ohio's kids.

FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING BECOMES LAW:
After years of working on a fair school funding formula which became my House Bill 1, it is incredibly encouraging to finally see additional funds going out for the benefit of countless Ohio kids. This helps account for the real cost of holistically educating children and preparing them for the jobs of tomorrow. Learn more [HERE](#).



ELECTION ENGAGEMENT RESTORATION ACT:
HB 380 repeals a sweeping ban on election officials collaborating with *any* nongovernmental person or organization on *any* election-related activities. The ban specifically includes voter registration, education, and even pollworker recruitment efforts. Election officials agree that these deliberate obstacles will infringe on Ohioans' freedom to vote in the manner of their choice. To learn more about why I'm leading the charge to have these provisions repealed, click [HERE](#).



FIGHTING FOR THE OHIO ANTI-CORRUPTION ACT:
Unchecked one-party rule has sparked scandal after scandal in Ohio politics, feeding into a culture of corruption in Columbus instead of putting people first. This monopoly on power cannot be allowed to continue to be aided and abetted by hidden donors with only their own special interests at heart. I will continue to fight to pass my and Rep. Allison Russo's Ohio Anti-Corruption Act which would shine a light on dark money in politics, because democracy dies in darkness. To learn more, click [HERE](#).

Resources

EXPANDED CHILD TAX CREDIT:

- The American Rescue Plan expanded the Child Tax Credit for 2021 to get more help to more families. The credit increased from \$2,000 per child in 2020 to \$3,600 for each child under age 6. For each child ages 6 to 16, it's increased from \$2,000 to \$3,000. It also makes 17-year-olds eligible for the \$3,000 credit. To get money to families sooner, the IRS is sending out half of the 2021 Child Tax Credit this year in monthly payments.
- This amounts to a massive tax cut for middle class families. For additional information on how taxpayers can access the Expanded Child Tax Credit, click [HERE](#) and or check out Frequently Asked Questions [HERE](#).

Unemployment Overpayments:

- Unemployment claimants with non-fraud overpayments that they received at no fault of their own can now request waivers that, if approved, would absolve the claimant from repaying those funds to the state.
- Please visit your unemployment portal to request a waiver and contact my office if you require additional assistance.
- Money will also be returned to claimants who qualify for a waiver but who previously repaid the overpayment. Notifications are being sent to claimants in the traditional unemployment program and the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. If approved, all portions of overpayments could be waived.

Emergency Rental Assistance:

Ohio House District 14 – Pandemic Resource Guide: Click [HERE](#)

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