

A legislative update from
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From the desk of Rep. Upchurch

Dear Neighbor,

Happy May! Now's a great time to check your voter registration before all the fun in the sun begins this summer. House Democrats are focused on continued efforts to better engage more young people-especially our graduating seniors- to participate in the civic process by getting registered to vote and learning about upcoming elections. Voting is one of the most fundamental rights that we have. Make your voice heard!

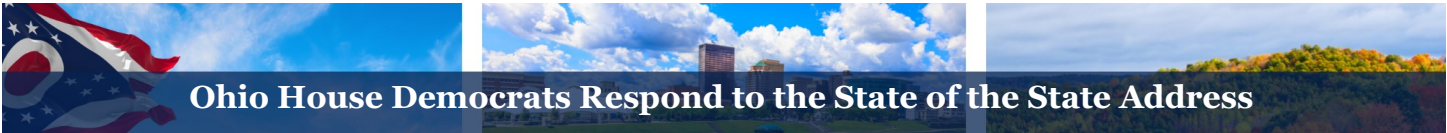
In our continued fight for reproductive rights, House Democrats unveiled their Protect Assistive Reproductive Technology Act. This legislation will provide civil and criminal immunity for providers, facilities, or health care personnel who provide assistive reproductive care, as well as for the patients seeking care. In addition, the legislation will provide data protections for patients, ensuring that third party organizations do not have access to private medical information. Every Ohioan deserves the right to build a family through assisted reproductive technology without fear of being prosecuted. This legislation will support families navigating infertility without adding to the emotional and financial stress they are already experiencing.

This May, Democrats are recognizing and celebrating our educators in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week. House Democrats thank all our educators and school staff who work hard each and every day to ensure our children and students are receiving the best education and care possible. That's why we support legislation to guarantee every Ohioan, no matter where they live, has a quality education. Democrats delivered a major win for education by continuing to fund the Fair School Funding Plan that would invest more money in our public schools. The Fair School Funding Plan supports students and ensures that public schools get the funds they need to succeed. Thank you, teachers, administrators, and staff, for all you do!

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

Sincerely,

Are you a recent graduate? Need to register to vote? Follow the QR code below to make your voice heard in the next upcoming election!



Ohio House Democrats Respond to the State of the State Address

Last month, Governor Mike DeWine delivered his State of the State address. Many Ohioans find themselves living in a state they believe is headed in the wrong direction. They believe a main reason for this is because its leaders do not reflect the values the majority of citizens hold dear. For far too long, those controlling the gerrymander levers of government have put the priorities of extremists and special interest groups above the priorities of the people. Therefore, at a time when Ohio should be unleashing its great potential to improve the lives of working families, improve schools, and keep our communities safe, the real state of the state is that cultural wars and distractions have constricted Ohio's growth and its future.

Putting people first will unlock Ohio's future, creating an Ohio that meets people where they are—where no one is unseen, unheard or uninspired to reach greatness

To unlock Ohio's future, we must continue the fight to put people first. Putting people first will ensure all Ohioans—no matter your race, gender or economic status—have the freedom to be who they are, the

dignity of a safe community and secure job, and the opportunity to thrive.



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is observed in May and addresses the challenges faced by millions of Americans living with mental health conditions. This month is a time to be dedicated to eradicating the stigma around mental health, extending support, fostering public education and advocating for policies that prioritize the well-being of individuals and families affected by mental illness.

Mental health is one of the top health shortfalls that puts Ohio at the low end of state rankings (44th), and racial disparities continue to impact residents. House Democrats have been strong advocates for expanding mental-health services while supporting investments for services, research, and job development, championing bill like:

- [HB 170 \(Grim, Thomas\)](#) - Enact Extreme Risk Protection Order Act
- [HB 175 \(Miranda, Brewer\)](#) - Enact the Keep Every Home Safe Act
- [HB 198 \(Blackshear, Jarrells\)](#) - Designate Counseling Awareness Month
- [HB 231 \(Miller, A.\)](#) - Establish 9-8-8 suicide

- prevention, mental health telephone line
- [HB 300 \(Baker\)](#) - Establish pilot program - remote treatment of opioid use disorder
- [HB 309 \(Thomas, Baker\)](#) - Regards firearms transfers, criminal background checks





May 7th is National Foster Care Day. Nearly 16,000 children are in the custody of a child welfare agency in Ohio. These children are often escaping abuse, addiction, or neglect. Today we recognize the important role that members from all parts of child welfare play in supporting children, youth, and families. House Democrats will continue to advocate for children in foster care and their success.



On Memorial Day, the House Democrats honor the courage and bravery of the Americans who gave the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we are the land of freedom, dignity, and opportunity.



Ohio House Dems wish you a happy Mother's Day!



On May 21st, we celebrate the vast array of cultural diversity displayed across our planet. The things that make us different are what make us special. Ohio is lucky to have so many amazing communities from around the world. From the Somali community to the Ukrainian community to our many different Latin American communities, Ohio is a better place because of our diversity.