



A legislative update from
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Dear Neighbor,

In the month since my last update, my colleagues in the House Minority have stood up against many dangerous bills that cause concern in our communities. You have heard and read about bills that will arm teachers in the classroom, without reasonable, common-sense training and background requirements, even as we mourn the loss of innocent lives to gun violence. We have seen attacks on transgender children being snuck into bills. And most disturbingly, Majority leaders who refuse to comply with the Ohio Constitutional anti-gerrymandering requirements that you, the voters, demanded.

These are the stories that take up newsprint and time on the news, and are the attacks on the safety and rights of Ohioans that my colleagues and I continue to fight back against. I also want you to know about the progress we are making toward a fairer and more equitable Ohio for all.

The House passed HB 142 which establishes a professional certification program in Ohio for Doulas. A Doula is a trained, nonmedical professional who provides continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to a pregnant woman. A doula can be involved at any stage of a pregnancy, from family planning — before a woman even becomes pregnant, to the postpartum stage. Doulas are both care providers and advocates for families that can help coordinate and navigate the healthcare needs of expecting mothers to help ensure the best outcomes for women and their babies.

I worked on the doula certification program legislation in my first term in the Ohio House and I am so proud to see it finally pass out of the House and on to the Senate. With this action, we are a large step closer to closing the healthcare gap for black and brown families. We are closer to reducing the number of mother and infant lives lost in childbirth. We are closer to a healthier, more equitable Ohio.

I am also proud to announce that HB 518 passed both the House and Senate. This bill contains many provisions regarding municipal courts across Ohio, including an expansion of the Toledo Municipal Court Housing Division's authority. I worked on this legislation with TMC Housing Division Judge Joseph Howe in order to improve the outcomes of housing and environmental cases in Toledo. The expanded authority this bill gives the Court will allow cases previously only heard by the Common Pleas Court to go before a court with the regular experience and expertise to evaluate such cases. This will provide better outcomes for those on both sides of these cases, as well as for our city in the timely prosecution of nuisance property holders, helping to remove the blights that make our city less safe and livable.

Oh June 14th Governor DeWine signed SB 224. SB 224 makes changes to the laws that impact funeral homes and funeral professionals, as well as securing parental right of disposition for a deceased adult child. My work on this legislation focused on closing gaps in the existing law regarding unlicensed persons acting as funeral directors and fraudulently offering funeral services to grieving families. When I heard about families being taken advantage of in their worst moments, being defrauded out of money by someone that claimed to be able to provide their loved one the dignity and respect they deserved after death and instead providing only heartache, I wondered how someone could get away with it. Existing law did not permit the State's industry licensing authority, the Ohio Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors, to investigate and prosecute claims against individuals that they received complaints about if they were not license holders. With this new legislation, that gap will be closed, the Board will be able to go after people unlawfully claiming to offer these services and put a stop the fraud being perpetrated on unsuspecting families.

Finally, I introduced HB 592 in March, to establish and fund a program to develop and educate youth in the area of urban farming. The Urban Farmer Youth initiative will be a pilot program targeted at urban youth from 6 to 18 years old. The aim is to teach these young people about growing their own food, the benefits that brings to them health wise, and to the health of their community at large. It is a program that will address issues in our urban communities such as food deserts and repurposing unused urban land. It will also teach young people about agriculture related career fields and, through an educational certification program, enable them to apply their knowledge and skills to their future career.



Happy Father's Day to everyone who is a "father". These days, fatherhood is thought to be different than in the good old days. But I learned that Father's Day originated on June 19, 1910 when a girl, Sonora Smart Dodd, wanted to honor her father who raised her and her brothers by himself. I know of many men who are doing just that, even when the media

shows a different story. Whether you are an uncle, brother, grandfather, or a woman, acting in this role, we celebrate you on Sunday, June 19th.

From my vantage, I celebrate you everyday for doing all the things that our children need. At the People's House in Columbus, I work to make state government helpful to you in these roles of provider, life coach, and supporter for our families. On Monday, June 13, 2022, my office, in conjunction with the Lucas County Health Department and Pathways' Brothers United held an informational program where mothers AND fathers came to learn how to prevent stillbirths and prevent other health risks to pregnant mothers. It is important that fathers are engaged from the beginning of their child's life.

I will continue to push for resources to improve the health and welfare of our families and communities. We must never lose sight of the real issues that you are facing each day as the parent for our children. I hope that you are treated to the best time that your children can provide you this Father's Day.



June 19, or Juneteenth, is a day to celebrate and commemorate the end of slavery in the United States of America. Commemorating the date President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation reached the slaves of Galveston, Texas in 1865

Now officially recognized federally and by the State of Ohio, on Juneteenth, we celebrate African American freedom and achievement, while looking to our own self-development as Americans and our respect for the freedom and liberty of all cultures.

Democrats continue to prioritize building up Black families and all Ohioans with legislation centered on health, housing, education, jobs, criminal justice reform and supporting minority owned businesses.

For more information about Juneteenth, visit www.Juneteenth.com.

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Democrats Fight to protect women and support families

Last month, Democrats introduced a plan to protect women's healthcare and support babies and families. Due to the national threat of reproductive freedom being stripped away, House and Senate Democrats proposed an [amendment](#) to Ohio's Constitution that would ensure all people have the freedom to make decisions about their bodies and health care.

[Over 60% of Ohioans](#) agree with the Roe v. Wade decision to allow access to abortion. Despite this, Ohio Republicans continue to prioritize legislation to ban abortion, including the [6-week abortion ban](#) signed into law by Gov. DeWine in 2019. [House Bill 598](#) and [Senate Bill 123](#) are current pieces of legislation that would completely ban abortion in Ohio without any exceptions for rape, incest or to protect the health of the mother.

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.



Democrats are working every day to ensure that women have the right to make their own health care decisions, and that families have the resources they need to succeed.

Behind on Mortgage, Rent, Utilities? Pathway can help



Pathway, Lucas County's local Community Action Agency, can help eligible residents who are behind on rent, and water and/or sewer utility bills catch up on past payments back to March 13, 2020 and provide additional assistance through September 30, 2022.

If you or any one you know are behind in rent and/or utility payments, please do not wait. Contact Pathway today. Let them help you stay in your homes and provide the necessities of life to your family and yourself.

Apply online at: Home.Pathwaytoledo.org
Or call 419-242-3521.