

A legislative update from
STATE REP. MONIQUE SMITH
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From the desk of Rep. Smith

Dear Neighbor,

Last month, President Biden and Democrats delivered the largest long-term investment in our infrastructure and competitiveness in nearly a century, signing into law the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This will bring more than \$11 billion to rebuild Ohio's infrastructure, and with it, create thousands of good paying union jobs for Ohio workers.

For Ohio to lead again in jobs and opportunity, I believe it is critical that we deliver these funds where they are needed most—to rebuild our roads and bridges, ensure clean drinking water for every Ohioan and invest in our future. It's about jobs, opportunity and building an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top. That's why Ohio House Democrats prioritized our state's infrastructure heading into the 134th General Assembly, fighting to reverse the governor's proposed cuts to public transit funding, and delivering historic wins to expand broadband access to unserved households and clean up Ohio's waterways. And it's why we stand today ready to work with the Biden administration and local communities to revitalize Ohio's infrastructure and create jobs, right here at home.

Ohio is set to receive more than \$11 billion dollars to repair our roads and bridges, replace outdated water lines in our communities and continue to invest in modern, accessible public transit systems that allow people to get to work, go to school and earn a living. Additionally, the infrastructure deal will provide every Ohioan with reliable access to high-speed internet, and ensure cleaner water, cleaner air, and more protections for our lakes and environment.

I believe the historic infrastructure bill will make life better for millions of Ohio residents, grow our economy, and restore Ohio's promise as a leader in innovation and opportunity for all of us, not just for some of us. Ohio House Democrats are proud to be able to continue this crucial investment in our state.

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

Happy Holidays!

Representative Monique Smith

Open Enrollment Healthcare

Open enrollment for healthcare coverage under the Affordable Care Act began Nov. 1 and ends January 15, 2022. Coverage will begin starting January 1, 2022. All US citizens or immigrants who are lawfully living in the US are eligible to enroll in health coverage through the Marketplace.



Visit healthcare.gov to preview 2022 health plans and find a plan that's right for you and your family.

District Spotlight: Vax-2-School Winners

The Ohio scholarship lottery was created to encourage young people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Winners had the chance to receive a \$10,000 or \$1000,000 scholarship to Ohio schools.

I am proud to announce District 16 winners! Congratulations to Benjamin Lichman, Maceo Tabora, and Logan Rechin of Rocky River, along with Christina Kinkelaar and Joshua Thomas of Westlake for each winning a \$10,000 scholarship. Thank you for protecting yourself and others by getting vaccinated!

In these winter months, it is more important than ever to get vaccinated. The CDC now is recommending everyone ages 5 and older get a COVID-19 vaccine to protect against the COVID-19 virus. Children are now eligible to receive the vaccine, and boosters are now available for anyone who has already received the vaccine. To find a vaccine provider near you, visit gettheshot.ohio.coronavirus.gov.

Rep. Smith : GOP gun bills are a missed opportunity to keep kids and communities safe

Last month, the Ohio House passed two controversial Republican-sponsored bills that would make Ohioans less safe. HB 99 would allow school districts to arm teachers in the classroom without any requirements for adequate training or safe storage . HB 227 would eliminate concealed weapon training and safety standards, including penalties for failing to notify police of a concealed weapon during a stop. I believe both of these bills will make schools and communities less safe and fail to tackle the root causes of gun violence in Ohio communities.

Teachers and law enforcement are opposed to bringing more guns into schools. A 2018 survey found that 80 percent of teachers were "strongly opposed" to having armed faculty in schools. Ohio's Fraternal Order of Police noted that the minimal training required under HB 99 is significantly less than the hundreds of hours of training required for police officers. Democrats expressed similar concerns that HB 99 only requires 20 hours of training for armed teachers during committee hearings.

Recent research indicates that states that pass legislation to eliminate permits and training see increased instances of gun violence. I believe we can and should do more to reduce gun violence while still respecting the rights of gun owners; it's what the vast majority of Ohioans want us to do, and what they called for us to do when they urged lawmakers to "do something" following the 2019 tragedy in Dayton.

On the House floor, I proposed an Amendment to HB 227, based on language my colleague Representative Russo and I proposed earlier this year, that would implement extreme risk protection orders, also known as red flag laws. ERPOs allow law enforcement and family to intervene at often the most critical time when a personal demonstrates red flag risks. They seek to take guns out of the wrong hands, not the hands of law abiding citizens. Research shows that states that have implemented ERPOs have seen decreases in mass shootings and suicide rates.

I will continue to push for these common sense gun safety measures, which a vast majority of Ohioans support and are already working in other states to reduce gun violence and keep our kids and communities safe.



Out and About



Rep. Monique Smith met with a wide range of local community leaders and organizations including:

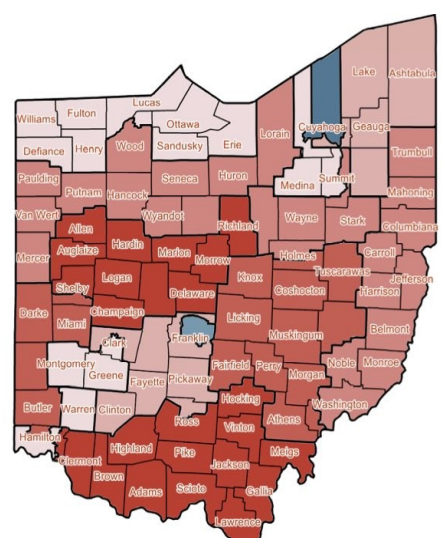
- Mayors of Bay Village, Fairview Park, Rocky River, and Westlake
- North Olmsted Mayor Elect
- Attended Giles-Sweet Elementary Interactive Government Day
- Fairview Park and Bay Village Police Chiefs
- Fairview Park Fire Chief
- Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity
- Distributed 50 Space kits to students at Forest Elementary School through the Center of Science and Industry
- Toured the NeurxSTEM Facility in Heath, Ohio
- Fairview Park and Westlake School Superintendents

Democrats say gerrymandered GOP congressional maps betray voters

Last month, Gov. DeWine betrayed Ohioans by signing into law a congressional map that unduly favors Republicans 13-2, and fails to meet Ohioans' demands for a fair, bipartisan map that keeps our communities together. The map faced immediate lawsuits by national redistricting groups, and will now proceed to the Ohio Supreme Court for review.

When Gov. DeWine gave the green light on this map that splits apart communities and goes against the will of Ohioans who called on us to draft fair maps, he went back on his word and his promise to the citizens of Ohio. Despite the 2018 congressional redistricting reforms that were created and overwhelmingly passed by more than 70 percent of Ohio voters to ensure that district maps were created with bipartisan input and support, Republicans shut Democrats and Ohioans out of the map-making process. House Democrats sent letters to the governor urging a veto of the map, but the governor dismissed them, along with the concerns raised by thousands of citizens who demanded a fair map-making process.

I believe that this gerrymandered map disrespects Ohio voters and the legislative process. Ohioans deserve better from their government.



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