

A legislative update from  
**STATE REP. ANITA SOMANI**  
HOUSE DISTRICT 11

 @AnitaSomaniMD

 @RepAnitaSomaniMD

 @OHHouseDems

 (614) 466-5358

 rep11@ohiohouse.gov



### From the desk of Rep. Somani

Dear Neighbor,

Last month, I was proud to be sworn in as state representative for Ohio House District 11. As your voice at the statehouse, I am here to advocate for you and your family. I would love to hear what issues affect you. I hope you look forward to this newsletter, as I will be sharing monthly legislative updates, important news, and district events.

Ohio House and Senate Democrats held a press conference last Tuesday after the Governor's State of the State Address. We were there to discuss our People First Agenda and to remind everyone that Governor DeWine was supporting things like tax exempt diapers, car seats and formula which had been proposed by Democrats.

Governor DeWine announced a program to address Ohio's maternal and infant mortality rates. However, states with restrictive abortion policies are inherently more likely to see higher maternal and infant mortality rates. Reproductive freedoms must be protected if we want to address these disparities.

My office is here to help with issues dealing with

- State agencies
- Unemployment
- Medicaid
- Commendations and condolences
- Bill ideas and legislative changes

Always remember, I am here to represent you and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Anita Somani MD  
State Representative  
Ohio House District 11



### Rep. Somani announces committee assignments



Last week, committee schedules for the 135th General Assembly were announced. I am excited to begin work on committees that reflect my 30 years experience as a physician. I will serve on the following committees:

- Health Provider Services (Ranking Member)
- Families & Aging
- Public Health Policy
- Insurance

More information on committee schedules for the Ohio House can be found at [www.ohiohouse.gov/committees](http://www.ohiohouse.gov/committees). Committees can be watched live at [www.ohiochannel.org](http://www.ohiochannel.org).

*Rep. Somani with her colleagues Rep. Beth Liston and Minority Whip Jessica Miranda at the State of the State*

### Legislation Spotlight: Creating the Ohio AAPI Affairs Commission

Assistant Minority Whip Tavia Galonski and I introduced a bill to create the Ohio Asian-American and Pacific Islander Affairs (AAPI) Commission and the Office of AAPI Affairs. This commission is an essential step in ensuring state government is accessible and equitable to all Ohioans. Ohio created an AAPI Advisory Board in 2010, but Governor DeWine chose not to renew this in 2019. AAPIS are currently the only ethnicity group in Ohio without a state-level commission.

The legislation now awaits a bill number and committee referral.

### Out and About

Over the last few weeks, I have begun to sit down and meet with both local and state organizations to discuss legislative priorities and what the organizations stand for. I have met with:

- Government Solutions Group
- Advocacy and Communications Solutions
- Franklin County Auditor's Office
- Jobs and Family Services
- Ohio School Boards Association
- Community Solutions
- Ohio Nursing Association
- Ohio Nursing of Health Plans
- Ohio Jewish Communities

I will be attending the Hilliard City Council meeting on Monday, February 13th at 7pm at 3800 Municipal Way, Hilliard, OH 43206. I would love to be able to meet some constituents and answer any questions you may have about this General Assembly.

### Tracking Senate Anti-Education Bills

There are currently four anti-education bills that have been introduced in the Senate and are moving through the Education Committee. Our office is monitoring these bills that are harmful to our education system. The list of bills are:

- SB 1 - Removes the power from Ohio's elected State Board of Education and transfers it to an unelected director appointed by the governor. It removes nearly all homeschool regulations
- SB 11 - Expands voucher programs and increases tax credits for homeschooling in Ohio, which harms public education. This is similar to the Backpack Bill (HB 290 from the 134th GA)
- SB 14 - Lets military veterans serve as teachers without any qualification or licenses
- SB 17 - Requires that high school students learn about free market capitalism

The full bill analyses texts can be found at [www.ohiosenate.gov/legislation](http://www.ohiosenate.gov/legislation). To voice your concerns about these bills, reach out to Senator Bremner, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee ([Bremner@OhioSenate.gov](mailto:Bremner@OhioSenate.gov) or 614- 466 - 8086). Watch out for future newsletters from our office with updates.

### Emergency SNAP Allotments to end March 1, Medicaid's unwinding

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Director announced that February will be the last month of emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allotments as part of the COVID-19 response. This is in response to the end of the federal public health emergency. Because this is a federal ruling, constituents are unable to receive fair hearing trials.

SNAP recipients will begin to receive their one, normal monthly payment in March. To avoid long wait times on the phone, Franklin County JFS suggests residents first call the number on the back of their EBT card to find their new standard monthly amount.

Benefits can be managed by calling your EBT card number, going to <https://benefits.ohio.gov/> or contacting the [Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services](http://Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services).

In addition to emergency SNAP ending, Medicaid will begin unwinding and returning to pre-pandemic operations on April 1st. This will result in eligibility redeterminations. For those affected, it is important to ensure that all contact information is updated on your Ohio Benefits Portal.

Our office is willing and able to help any constituents with questions regarding these orders.

[district11-leave@list.ohiohouse.gov](mailto:district11-leave@list.ohiohouse.gov)