

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

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From the desk of Rep. Somani



Dear Neighbor,

In response to Governor DeWine's State of the State speech, I would like to address some of the most pressing issues I believe Ohioans are facing.

Ohio is one of the most gerrymandered states in the nation, which has resulted in a state legislature that does not accurately reflect the will of the people. Ohio citizens must address this issue through fairer districting, so that the Statehouse can be representative of the people instead of politicians. As Governor DeWine mentioned, gun violence has become a top public health and safety issue for Ohioans. Despite this, it has been nearly impossible to pass common sense gun violence legislation. Finally, I want to focus on protecting the reproductive rights that we have now enshrined in our state constitution. Eradicating outdated and medically unfounded restrictions on the Ohio law books should be a top priority.

In general, my colleagues and I were disappointed in Governor DeWine's address. For further Democratic response to his speech, you can find a link to Leader Russo's comments [here](#).

In light of the passage of Issue 1 in November, I have continued to fight for the protection of reproductive freedom in Ohio. This week is National Infertility Awareness Week, and as such, it is my great pleasure to announce I am introducing a bill to protect Assistive Reproductive Technology, including IVF, in our state.

Ensuring access to IVF is a vital component of the fight for reproductive rights, which ultimately is about having autonomy in the decision to have or not have children. It is of utmost importance to me that one has full autonomy over all reproductive decisions in their lives, and this bill is a step in the right direction.

As always, do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions on legislation or concerns that you may have. Sincerely,

Anita Somani

Anita Somani M.D.
 State Representative
 Ohio House District 11

Childcare Program Grants

Governor DeWine announced a new set of grants to increase childcare providers access. These grants include funding for opening new childcare centers, repairing existing centers, and increasing capacity for children with special needs.

Qualifying childcare programs may apply at <https://registry.occrra.org> by **April 29th, 2024 at 5pm**



Childcare Assistance

A new voucher program will assist families in covering the costs of childcare. It is estimated that this program will support about 8,000 families. To learn more about your eligibility or fill out a paper application click [here](#). To apply online, use this [link](#).

Summer EBT Webinar

If you would like more information about Summer EBT programs, register for this webinar on Wednesday May 1st at 12pm [here](#).

Rep. Somani Announces May Office Hours

I will be hosting Office Hours in Dublin at the **Dublin Library in Meeting Room 1** on **Tuesday, May 7th** from **5:00-6:00 p.m.**

This is an opportunity to ask questions or share legislative concerns. Please reach out to my office with any questions!

JOIN ME:
 TUESDAY, MAY 7TH
 FROM 5-6:00 P.M.

COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN LIBRARY DUBLIN BRANCH
 75 N HIGH ST, DUBLIN, OH 43017

REPRESENTATIVE ANITA SOMANI M.D.
MAY OFFICE HOURS

Receive updates about legislation moving through the Statehouse
 Ask questions and share your concerns on local or state issues

LOCATED IN MEETING ROOM 1

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US AT
 REP 11@OHIOHOUSE.GOV OR 614-466-5358

Introducing Protect Assistive Reproductive Technology (ART) Act

This week, I introduced legislation that will protect access to Assistive Reproductive Technology (ART), such as IVF. This bill aims to provide civil and criminal immunity for patients, providers, facilities, and healthcare personnel involved in assistive reproductive care. Additionally, the bill will protect private patient medical data from being shared with third-parties, such as state regulatory bodies or out-of-state entities.

An essential piece of the fight for reproductive freedom is the protection of fertility treatments like IVF. According to the CDC, over 238,000 Americans sought ART care in 2021. Ohioans deserve the right to create a family, and this bill will ensure that families utilizing ART will not be burdened with the stress of legal prosecution in addition to the emotional and physical stress of infertility. All reproductive decisions are incredibly personal, and the only people involved in such decisions should be the patients and their providers, not government.



Update on Issue 2

In November, 57% of Ohioans voted yes on Issue 2 to legalize recreational marijuana. According to Jim Canepa, the director of the Division of Cannabis Control, applications for the licensure of growers, processors, and dispensaries will be available by **June 7th**. The Division says their current deadline for approving those licenses is in **September** of this year.

Out and About



Alongside Leader Russo, I presented a commendation to Washington Elementary as a purple star school.



I had a wonderful time at the National Association of Women Business Owners Reception. I loved celebrating their achievements as well as learning more about the issues most important to business owners.



This month, alongside the rest of the Democratic Caucus, I attended Governor DeWine's State of the State address.



I always appreciate talking to advocates and constituents about the issues most important to them when they come to the Statehouse. This week I had the pleasure of meeting with the Alzheimer's Association (left) and Case Western medical students (right) to discuss our state's most pressing healthcare issues.

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