

State Representative Richard Dell'Aquila

Ohio House District 15

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Committees:

- Financial Institutions (Ranking Member)
- Aviation and Aerospace
- Commerce and Labor
- Economic and Workforce Development
- Ways and Means
- 9-1-1 Steering Committee

Dear Neighbors,

I hope as we approach the warmer months of 2024 that you all are able to spend ample time with friends, family, and loved ones.

If the past is prologue, we anticipate that the coming month of March will likely not have any House voting meetings (called “Sessions”). However, the other work here in Columbus, and “in District” at home, and our House committee meetings will continue.

In this newsletter, I will share information on some of the current legislation, as well as other initiatives that may be of relevance to you. These will include:

- Cuyahoga County Summer Youth Employment Program
- Housing Tax Credit Program
- Cleveland Budget Process and Residential Tax Abatement Program
- Possible “Super Speeder” legislation
- Caregiver Legislation and Ombudsman support

As ranking member of the House Financial Institutions Committee, I am working on the idea of creating a state bank, similar to other states. For example, North Dakota has had a profitable state bank since the early 20th century that has assisted its residents and the development of that state in many ways.

Workforce development has bipartisan support in the House. With some other members, I am considering the potential benefits of a statewide student-civilian organization for high school students to earn apprenticeships in Ohio unions and tuition money to attend Ohio schools—all while helping to build Ohio’s economy.

Please – as always—do not hesitate to reach out should I ever be of assistance. It is a pleasure and an honor to serve you, and I welcome any and all questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Richard Dell'Aquila

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Around the District

CUYAHOGA COUNTY—Youth Opportunities Unlimited is now accepting applications for summer employment opportunities for youth, ages 14-19! Applications are open until May 1, 2024 for paid work experiences in June and July. There are two programs available: the Summer Youth Employment Program and the PEEKE Internship Program.

The Summer Youth Employment Program provides Cuyahoga County high school freshmen through seniors with the opportunity to complete a six-week paid work experience, beginning June 17, 2024. Students work an average of 25 hours a week, and are paid \$13.50 an hour, with the opportunity earn up to \$2,025. This year, there are a number of career academies being offered, where qualifying students who are interested in specific career fields including construction, manufacturing, and sustainability can explore their interest through hands-on experience. For more information and to apply between February 1-May 1, 2024, visit www.youcle.org/syep.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT—The Y.O.U. PEEKE Internship Program is a selective program offered to qualifying high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors throughout Cuyahoga County. Students who are interested in gaining professional skills and hands-on career exploration while earning a stipend and networking in a career field of their interest are encouraged to apply! In addition to an internship experience, this program offers professional development workshops and certification trainings. Students seeking a summer internship opportunity can submit an application at www.youcle.org/internships from February 1-May 1, 2024.

HOUSING TAX CREDIT PROGRAM—Included in the State Operating Budget (HB 33), the **Single Family Tax Credit Program** will increase the inventory of affordable single family housing and provide \$50 million a year to develop or rehabilitate housing in Ohio. The program leverages public-private partnerships to increase the inventory of affordable, single family housing for Ohio's growing workforce.



The Program (SingleFamilyTaxCredit@ohiohome.org/singlefamilytaxcredit.aspx) provides these tax credits to fill the financing gap to develop or rehabilitate Ohio housing. Proposed projects may receive up to \$50,000 in tax credits per dwelling, which may be claimed upon completion of the project.

The dwellings must be sold to a buyer who will use it as their primary residence; and the sale price must be “affordable” (i.e. less than 30% of the buyer's monthly income). Applications must be for at least five single family dwellings of a certain size. Applications will be scored on the criteria set forth in the 2024 Allocation Plan and 2024 Underwriting Guidelines (available online).

The application period is now open for new Single-Family Housing Tax Credits.

[Click here](#) to learn more information. The deadline to apply is **April 5 at 4:00 p.m.**



Around the District (continued)

CLEVELAND—The city of Cleveland is currently undertaking its city budget process; while the budget hearings for the city's General Fund are over, there will likely be upcoming final discussions on amendments and changes.

[Among the city's \\$778 million budget for 2024](#), \$400 million is reserved for the Department of Public Safety. While changes are still pending, we encourage you to examine the tentative funding initiatives within the [2024 Mayor's Estimate](#).

We encourage you to provide feedback by [leaving a public comment here](#), or by reaching out to the Mayor Bibb's office at mayorbibb@clevelandohio.gov.



CLEVELAND—Online applications are now open for Cleveland's new Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) residential tax abatement program.

The city's updated residential tax abatement program is an incentive to encourage investment across all Cleveland neighborhoods. The abatement percentage and affordable set-aside requirements are contingent upon the type of project and the CRA where the project is located.

[Click here to access the Application for Single- and Two-Family Structure Residential Tax Abatement.](#)

[Click here to access the Application for Multi-Family Structure \(3+ Units\) Residential Tax Abatement.](#)


For single and two-family projects, abatement values are between 85 and 100 percent of the improved value up to \$350,000 for new construction projects and \$450,000 for rehabilitation. For multi-family projects, abatement values are between 85 and 100 percent and require a set-aside of units that are affordable to families making 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). All projects will be subject to an audit and review every three years throughout the 15 year affordability period. Multi-family projects may also be required to enter into a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) to receive tax abatement if the total value of the abatement is greater than \$250,000 or the development cost is greater than \$20 million.


DISTRICT 15—ServeOhio—Ohio's Commission on Service and Volunteerism—has announced grant funding to support community service projects as part of ServeOhio Day on June 22, 2024. The purpose of the funding is to support projects centered on creating and improving community assets or

infrastructure, incorporating education and collaboration to bring a positive impact to Ohio communities.

[Click here](#) to learn more and to apply; Applications must be completed by **March 26**.

SERVE OHIO | VOLUNTEERS IN OHIO



More than
3 MILLION
volunteers contributed
278 MILLION
 hours
last year



Legislative Updates

“SUPER SPEEDERS”—As I am sure you are all aware, Ohio is experiencing an increase in reckless drivers who operate their vehicles at highly excessive speeds, rather than observing posted speed limits. Considering that speed is the highest-contributing factor to vehicular accidents within the state of Ohio, more must be done to “pump the brakes” on these recklessly speeding drivers who endanger the lives of others as well as their own lives.

For these reasons, I am working on legislation similar to statutes enacted in other states, called “Super Speeder” laws. This legislation would impose a fine, in addition to existing penalties, for drivers convicted of operating their vehicle at an extremely high speed far in excess of the posted limit (perhaps 20 or more miles per hour over the posted limit). Failure to pay this additional fine would result in a suspension of the offender’s license and driving privileges. As I continue to discuss this bill idea with stakeholders and law enforcement, all drivers must become more aware of the absolute requirement for safe operation of our vehicles and that we not endanger the safety of others around us as we travel the Ohio’s roads.



CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE—As you may recall, I recently introduced **HB 405** to authorize income tax credits for disability-related home care expenses, a bill which is receiving bipartisan support and would provide up to \$5000 in financial assistance for stay at home caregivers. [Click here](#) to see the bill.

I am excited to now also announce that the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) will be providing regional Ombudsman programs and \$2.3 million to strengthen state support for long-term care residents. The plan is for ODA to distribute funds over the coming months to hire additional resident advocates, add next generation resources, and increase program visibility.

Regional Ombudsman programs are coordinated by ODA’s [Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman](#) (SLTCO), which works to resolve problems related to the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals who receive long-term care services in facilities such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other residential care communities. Strengthening Ohio’s Long-Term Care Ombudsman program was among the recommendations of the [Nursing Home Quality & Accountability Task Force](#) to improve nursing home care throughout the state. The funding will be used to launch a program of modernization, centered on bolstering program staff, resources, and outreach efforts.

Funding will be used by regional Ombudsman programs to recruit and hire additional resident advocates while supporting employee retention efforts. Funding will also be used to acquire next generation technologies that will leverage data insights, helping programs strategically deploy staff where there is the greatest need.

Combined, these enhancements will allow for improved program efficiency, increasing the ability of ombudsmen to visit and speak with long-term care residents, while also increasing their ability to respond to complaints.

The Nursing Home Quality & Accountability Task Force’s [Recommendations Report](#) laid the foundation for the Governor and General Assembly to pass a package of nursing home investments and policy reforms as part of the state operating budget – [Amended Substitute House Bill 33](#).

Earlier in February, the state announced the launch of the [Ohio Nursing Home Quality Navigator](#), an online tool to provide users with detailed information about nursing homes across the state in one convenient digital location. The task force continues to meet to work on further implementation efforts. Updates about the work of the task force are available at [Aging.Ohio.gov/nhtaskforce](#).

Ohioans can contact the SLTCO via email at OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov or via phone at 1-800-282-1206. Ohioans can find their regional long-term care ombudsman program on ODA’s [Find Services map](#). Here is the link to the Ohio Department of Aging: www.aging.ohio.gov.