



A legislative update from
STATE REP. RACHEL BAKER
HOUSE DISTRICT 27



(614) 644-6886 | rep27@ohiohouse.gov

 @RepRachelBaker

 @RachelBakerforOhio



From the desk of Rep. Baker

Dear Neighbor,

It's been awhile since my office last updated you. I hope you had a peaceful winter and are enjoying this wonderful spring weather! Over the past couple of months my colleagues and I have been working very hard on Ohio's operating budget.

During the month of February, my office celebrated Black History Month. This was a time for the office to recognize the tremendous contributions, achievements, and resilience of Black individuals throughout history.

In March, we celebrated Women's History Month. From trailblazers who shattered glass ceilings to everyday heroes making a difference, we celebrated women's strength, courage and unwavering spirit.

On March 1st we celebrated our great state's 222nd anniversary! Each day, my office and colleagues fight for legislation to make Ohio a better place for all constituents to live, work, and raise a family. Here's to another 222 fantastic years of Ohio and all our state has to offer!

The month of April is designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month and is meant to raise awareness regarding the prevalence of sexual assault. If you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual assault you can call 800-656-4673 to be connected to local sexual assault service provider.

In this newsletter, you will get a behind the scenes look at the process of crafting Ohio's operating budget and what I've been up to in the House Finance Committee. You also will learn more about SB1 and how it effects Ohio's higher education system and what I've been up to both in the district and in Columbus. Also, an important reminder to vote on May 6th!

If you ever have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me and I would be happy to assist you.

Sincerely,
Rachel

Here are some ways my office can assist you:

- Disputes with state government agencies;
- Ohio House commendations, condolences, and congratulatory letters;
- Proposing bill ideas and law changes;
- Connecting you or your business to state programs or services

Helpful Contacts:

- BMV: (844) 644-6268
- Hamilton County Board of Elections: (513) 632-7000
- Hamilton County Job and Family Services: (513-946-1000)
- Legal Aid of Greater Cincinnati: (513) 241-9400
- Ohio Consumers' Counsel: (614) 466-8574
- Unemployment Compensation Hotline: (877) 644-6562



Operating Budget



Protect the Public Libraries

Our office heard from many people in our district voicing their concerns about the potential loss of public library funds in our district. We appreciated hearing from everyone and learning about what our district is passionate about.

My office agrees with your concerns, and believes that libraries are a critical resource in our communities. We believe that libraries are a place for children to learn and for communities to come together. Libraries are an important part of our district and Ohio.

Because of your advocacy, the public library funds, in the budget, were increased from the initial House-proposed cuts. Thank you for reaching out to my office, to let us know how you feel.

Fair School Funding

The past few months, we heard from many educators and constituents about their concerns about public school funding in the operating budget.

My office believes that fully funding our public education system can and should be done in this budget. This starts by rolling out the next two phases of the fair school funding formula with inputs that have been adjusted to account for inflation and current costs. We cannot keep asking schools to do more with less. Additionally, I oppose the cap placed on school districts that punishes districts that have been responsible stewards of funding.

I will continue advocating for the state to pay its fair share. Providing quality public education is not a choice, it is a constitutional requirement.



Ohio's Operating Budget

Every odd year in a General Assembly, the Ohio House of Representatives and Senate receive the Governor's proposed operating budget. In February, my colleagues and I got right to work to understand the Governor's priorities and see if we could make any enhancements to the proposed budget. The House passed its version of the budget (HB96) and it is currently in the Senate. To learn more about the bill, you can check it out in the links section of the newsletter!



Operating Budget: Medicaid



On April 9th, my fellow colleagues and I met for a House session to vote on HB96. After months of hard work on the operating budget, we were able to speak on the amendments that we made it into the bill.

My office and the Democrats House policy team, fought really hard to create amendments that would benefit all Ohioans. I had the opportunity to talk on the House floor about how HB96 would affect healthcare and Medicaid in Ohio. There were many troublesome health-related provisions in this budget, including a trigger to end the Medicaid expansion program, cuts to opioid overdose prevention efforts, and cuts to the lead abatement program. In HB96 the provisions are harmful to Ohioans and it will cost our state more in the long run. My office believes that people deserve better.

Because of the missed opportunities to make impact, health provisions that were nonsensical and other provisions that will cause real harm, I voted no on the state operating budget. HB96 passed the House and it moved to the Senate for their consideration. I have added a few resources below, if you are interested in understanding the state operating budget process.





SB 1 and Issue 2

House Passage of SB 1

On March 19th, SB 1 passed the house. The “No” votes included all Democrats and 3 Republicans. SB 1 impacts the future of higher education in Ohio.

To name a few restrictions, SB1 prohibits any diversity, equity and inclusion trainings or orientation content at public colleges and universities, prohibits DEI offices or positions, and prohibits any scholarships that a DEI component (even if the scholarship funding comes from a private donor).

SB1 will require a three credit hour course on American civics that includes American economic system and capitalism, which will be mandatory for all bachelors degree students.

This bill also will require faculty and staff to encourage and allow students to reach their own conclusions about “controversial” concepts, like climate change, immigration, DEI, marriage and abortion.

Overall, this piece of legislature is a disadvantage for Ohio’s students education and undermines the hard work of faculty members. I voted “No” on this bill, and I will stand with all of Ohio’s educators and students as we continue to push back to these types of bills.



Vote on May 6!

On May 6th, there is a statewide issue on the Ohio ballot. Issue 2, would renew the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement project. This program would continue a program that has been in place almost 40 years to provide grants and loans for local roadways, bridges and water protection projects.

Every 10 years, Ohio voters vote on whether Ohio should renew the program or not. The State Capital Improvement Project started in 1987 and has been approved by voters every 10 years since then. Over these 40 years, it has supported over \$7 billion worth of projects.

Issue 2 would not raise your taxes, instead, it would rely on the bonds that are paid off with existing state revenue.

Make sure you get out and go vote on May 6th!

ISSUE 2 WOULD

ALLOW **\$2.5B IN BONDS OVER 10 YEARS**
FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE LIKE:

-  Roads & bridges
-  Water & wastewater systems
-  Stormwater & sanitation





Rep. Baker in the Community

House Democrats Celebrate Women’s History Month!

On Tuesday, March 17th, I joined several members of the Ohio Women’s Democratic Caucus for a press conference honoring Women’s History Month. Each member highlighted legislative priorities we are fighting for that empower and support women across Ohio.

At this press conference, I was able to discuss HB141 which will establish Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Centers (PPECs), or medical daycares, in Ohio. As we all know, Ohio is facing a shortage of home health nurses and many families of children with complex medical needs find themselves without home health care services. This need is felt especially hard by single mothers of children with complex medical needs. PPECs will be able to support families in keeping their children living safely at home.



Attending the HRC Gala!

In February, I attended the HRC (Human Rights Campaign) Gala. I was inspired by the many messages of strength, courage, love, inclusion, and bravery.

When we look back on this time in history and are asked what we did, let us all be able to say we were brave and we did everything we could.

My office and I are aware of the hurtful decisions against LGBTQ issues being made at the federal and state level. If my office can ever be of help to you, please feel free to reach out!





Rep. Baker in the Community



Ohio People First Townhall

I joined the Hamilton County Democratic Delegation on March 16th for the Ohio People First Town Hall.

There was a great turnout for this townhall where Hamilton County constituents learned about the Ohio Democrats' priorities at the Statehouse and how taxpayers' dollars are being spent in the state operating budget. We had a lively conversation with the community and are already talking about scheduling another event.

Thank you to everyone who came out and joined us on a Saturday morning!

Nursing Dinner with the Bearcats

On April 11th, I was honored to provide the keynote address at the Nursing Dinner with the Bearcats.

We celebrated my friend Latrice (pictured), who was awarded the Elizabeth Kemble Alumni Award! I sat with 4 alumni from the 1975 class and heard all about nursing in the 1970s, connected with so many friends, and chatted about the role that nurses play in creating healthy communities.

Thank you to UC Nurses for including me for this special event!



Breakfast at the Governor's Residence

On March 8th, I went to a productive breakfast with the Governor and a few of the state legislators who are working on child-focused initiatives. We discussed the Governor's proposed budget that provided some important child supportive ideas. Some of these ideas included improving access to child dental care, expanding support for child care and early childhood education, and investing in evidence-based initiatives to decrease infant mortality. It's important that the House and the Senate protect these initiatives as the budget moves through the legislative chambers.

Thank you Governor DeWine for including me for this insightful breakfast with my fellow legislators!