



# Agriculture Newsletter

## State Representative Beth Lear

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[www.ohiohouse.gov/beth-lear](http://www.ohiohouse.gov/beth-lear)

### Dear Neighbors and Friends,

It is an honor to serve as your State Representative for House District 61, covering eastern Delaware and western Knox counties.

As a proud 4-Her and a granddaughter with a rich family history of farmers in my family tree, I know firsthand what a vital role you play in our state's economy, health, and well-being.

I'm an Olentangy High School and Ohio State University graduate; Central Ohio has always been my home. I will continue to do my part to support this district, especially our agricultural community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my office. My staff and I are ready to help.

### Farmland Lease Agreement Updates

Changes have been added to the law concerning farmland lease agreements. Per Section 5301.71 of the Ohio Revised Code, which went into effect in July 2022, landlords have a September 1 deadline to terminate lease agreements.

If the property owner attempts to terminate a lease after the September 1 date, the tenant would be permitted to continue to operate for another period unless both parties agree and sign a termination date of agreement. Review the July 2022 OSU Extension Farm Office Law Bulletin at [farmoffice.osu.edu](http://farmoffice.osu.edu) for more information.

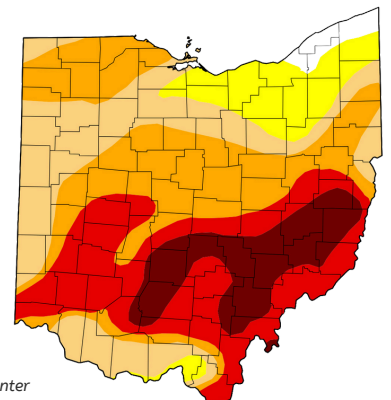
### Resources for Ohio's Ongoing Drought

It's no secret that Ohio has had a dry and hot summer. Currently, drought conditions cover 87.7% of Ohio, with an estimated 8.3 million Ohioans in affected areas. As of the first week of October, **Delaware and Knox County are experiencing D2-level drought conditions**, but the level could change with the rain. **Please use the Ohio Department of Agriculture website, [agri.ohio.gov](http://agri.ohio.gov)**, to check for the current status. The site updates every Thursday. Our region is currently experiencing extremely dry conditions that are putting a strain on our livestock, crops, and water resources.

I encourage those who are having hardships due to the drought to document the issues and report them to your county Farm Service Agency. **For Delaware County, call Stacy Ruh at (740)363-3671 or Katie Hill at (740)392-0891 for residents in Knox County.** They can also help you get connected to resources you may be eligible for due to the drought.

#### Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data



Source: National Drought Mitigation Center

# PROGRAMS & UPDATES

## Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Program

I have exciting news—in 2022, Ohio created a tax credit program to help beginning farmers! As we celebrated 4-H and agricultural opportunities across Ohio during this fair season, it's important to highlight that the State of Ohio now offers tax credits for beginning farmers through the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Program.

This program provides income tax credit opportunities for:

- Beginning farmers who complete a financial management program.
- Individuals or businesses that sell or lease farmland, livestock, buildings, or equipment to beginning farmers.

As the state representative for one of Ohio's most agriculturally rich regions, I understand your vital role in our families and communities. Your contribution is crucial to Ohio's agricultural legacy. I urge you to explore the program and see how it can help you invest in the future.

For more information about Ohio's Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Program, please visit: [agri.ohio.gov/programs/farmland-preservation-office/Beginning-Farmer-Tax-Credit-Program](https://agri.ohio.gov/programs/farmland-preservation-office/Beginning-Farmer-Tax-Credit-Program).

## House Joint Resolution 6

Ohioans are rightly worried about their property taxes, and we all must work together to address the causes of these tax increases. My colleague, Representative Scott Wiggam, and I have introduced a Joint Resolution to limit property tax increases to 4% per year.

The joint resolution proposes a constitutional amendment for the November 5, 2024, ballot that would limit annual property tax increases in Ohio to either 4% or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. This cap applies to all real property, with some exceptions, such as when a parcel is divided, a tax exemption ends, or a building is completed or improved. If passed, the amendment would prevent state and local governments from imposing additional fees to compensate for lost tax revenue.

It applies to all property types, and tax increases on improvements other than buildings may also be limited to 4% annually.

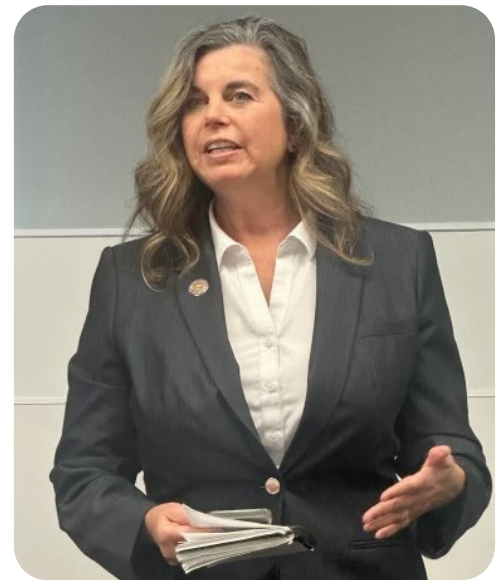
The amendment would take effect on January 1, 2025, and taxes for the prior year would be based on 2022 figures plus approved levies in 2022-2024. The financial impact depends on property value increases and new levies.

Large property value jumps or new levies could result in revenue losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

For example, if property taxes increased by more than 4% in 2023, the amendment would reduce those increases, especially in areas with updated property valuations.

Ohio farmers have shaped and sustained our state through hard work, ingenuity, and a strong commitment to their families.

As the Vice-Chair of Ohio's Energy and Natural Resources Committee, thank you for everything you do to make Ohio a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Your efforts strengthen our community.



*Photo: State Representative Beth Lear*

Contact my office by email or phone at [Rep61@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:Rep61@ohiohouse.gov) or (614) 466-1431.