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Statehouse Newsletter

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Message From Chris

As summer ends and a new legislative session approaches, I'm reaching out to update you on my efforts to lower everyday costs and deliver financial relief for families. I'm proud of what we've passed, despite resistance in Columbus.

My focus will always be on lowering costs for residents and pursuing legislation that benefits our community. If my office can ever be of assistance to you or your loved ones, please don't hesitate to reach out. If we cannot help you, we will connect you with the resource most able to assist with your needs.

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Policy Agenda

This past year, I've focused on drafting practical legislation that lowers everyday costs, strengthens public services, and helps keep our community a great place to live, work, and retire. Below are some of the proposals with their bill numbers so you can track progress. I am working diligently on building support to pass these before the end of the term this year. Legislation that has not passed will expire at year end and will be re-introduced in January under a new bill number of the next General Assembly.

Property Taxes

These bills aim to provide meaningful relief while protecting the local services our communities rely on.

- **HB 881:** Establish state credit for homeowners and renters.
- **HB 882:** Provide state funding to help local municipalities address delinquent property taxes.
- **HB 955:** Expand homestead exemptions for surviving spouses of disabled veterans.
- **HB 154:** Require school board approval for CRA abatements
- **HB 608:** Establishes constituent-focused property tax reforms

Voting & Campaigns:

These proposals focus on improving the voting experience while increasing public confidence in our election system.

- **HB 893:** Require Board of Elections to shorten wait times at polling places for the disabled and people who have trouble standing for long periods.
- **HB 770:** Allow campaigns to refund donations, increase campaign finance transparency and allow donations to charity.

Strengthening Public Services & Community Integrity:

These proposals give teachers, first responders, and local governments the tools they need to better serve Ohio families.

- **HB 884:** Require the school funding formula to use updated to current costs for funding local schools
- **HB 883:** Allow EMS to be reimbursed for treatment at home and at the ER
- **HB 879:** Create a penalty for robbing a gravesite or memorial
- **HB 877:** remove 5-year cap on pension service credit purchase
- **HB 880:** Allocate additional funds to fully compensate mandatory teacher literacy training

Energy & Environment

These bills encourage clean energy innovation while protecting our environment for future generations

- **HB 755:** Allow homeowners and renters to use balcony solar devices
- **HB 878:** Increase penalties for repeat dredge dumping violations





Data Centers

Back in June, I was honored to be selected to serve on the Joint Data Center Study Committee. My colleagues and I spent three weeks and across seven hearings, we listened to almost 24 hours of testimony from industry leaders, utility experts, environmental advocates, labor organizations, local officials, and Ohioans from across the state. From these testimonies, four primary concerns consistently emerged: ensuring that data centers are good partners to the communities that host them, protecting Ohio's environment, reforming outdated tax incentives, and preventing the costs of serving these facilities from being shifted onto everyday ratepayers.

The testimony made one thing clear: while data centers present both tremendous changes and significant challenges, our state and local government must hold developers accountable. Data center projects can place extraordinary demands on our electric grid and local infrastructure. As Ohio continues to grow, we need to set the terms for the future and standards that we want. We must insist on the policies that allow us to create jobs while protecting families and communities.

Increasing demand from large data centers has contributed to rising regional capacity auction costs; those and other related expenses can ultimately increase the monthly electric bills paid by Ohio households. At the same time, the State of Ohio has blocked shovel ready wind and solar projects that would generate even more power than that used by all the state's data centers combined.

As the General Assembly prepared to adjourn for summer recess, it appeared we were on the verge of taking an important first step to managing this power imbalance and cost shifting. However, at the very last minute, H.B. 646, the bill that was supposed to make data centers pay their fair share, was shelved.

Another concern that emerged during the hearings were that over 10 years ago, the Kasich administration granted tech giants like Microsoft, Google, and Meta 100% sales tax exemptions via special contracts that extend into the 2040s and 2050s. I have called for investigations into these multi-billion dollar giveaways and am working on legislation to restructure the deals.

My caucus and I are ready to return to Columbus at any time to pass these vital ratepayer protections before this situation gets worse and scheduled rate increases take effect. We have requested the Governor and Public Utilities Commission to use their discretionary powers and authority to set rules to make this happen until the legislature takes action. Bipartisan solutions are drafted and ready to protect Ohioans from unfair cost-shifting, but we need the legislative majority to stop playing political games and come to the table. I will continue to stand up against these bad corporate deals and advocate for an affordable, reliable energy grid that puts the financial well-being of our local families first.

Good jobs and development can happen without ripping off taxpayers or utility ratepayers. Other states have better managed this development and we can follow their lead in demanding the future we deserve.



Resources for Old Brooklyn

Whether you're looking for help with housing, utilities, food assistance, or government services, these organizations are here to help. If you're not sure where to start, my office is happy to point you in the right direction.



Legal Assistance

Provides free legal assistance for low income individuals

- Renter Assistance
- Family Law
- Public Benifets
- Expudgment & Sealing

Contact: 216-861-5500



Home Repair Workshop

OBCDC hosts regular informational workshops to teach basic homerepair and maintenance skills

**workshop
schedule &
sign up**



Your City Council

Assistance w/ city road repairs, help with local city services, and addressing local disputes.

Nikki Hudson (Ward 11)

216-664-4235

Kris Harsh (Ward 4)

216-664-2943



Your Federal Government

Assistance w/ passports, Medicare, Social Security, and general help with federal agencies.

Representative Shontel Brown

Phone: (216) 522-4900

Senator Jon Husted

Phone: (216) 539-7877

Senator Bernie Moreno

Phone: (216) 522-7272



Energy Assistance

With the winter season approaching, now is the time to familiarize yourself with the energy assistance programs in Ohio. For Cuyahoga County residents, StepForward manages The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP).

Contact: 216-480-4327 for more information



General Community Resources

Explore more resources/ assistance in the Old Brooklyn Neighborhood

- Homeowner/Renter Resources
- Food Resources
- Digital Resources



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