

A Legislative Report from
REP. KENNY YUKO



Dear Constituents,

All eyes are on Columbus as the state budget process is in full swing. Early projections place the deficit at \$5 billion between forecasted revenues and expenses during the next two fiscal years. This will be the tightest budget in decades.

Ohio adopts an operating budget every two years, in odd-numbered years. It is essentially a four-step process: the Governor presents his or her budget in January; the House of Representatives passes its budget in the early spring; the Senate then prepares its version; and a final compromise budget is due by June 30. The Ohio Constitution requires a balanced budget when passed.

Without question, Ohio is experiencing tough economic times. Ohio's budget shortfalls and economic problems require a long-term plan and outlook. We need to reassess our state's priorities.

In the coming months, I will continue to advocate for a budget that gets our economy moving again, closes corporate tax loopholes, and provides tax relief for the middle class and working families.

Our state government cannot be one that asks for too much and does too little. Every Ohio family deserves better.

As always, I welcome your ideas, suggestions, or comments. Please contact me if you have any questions about the budget or any matter that concerns you.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
 State Representative

CONTACT

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APRIL 2005

Dear Constituents 1

Supporting Collective Bargaining 2

Fighting for Ohio's Families' tour 3

Summer Science Institutes info 3

Toll-free numbers of state services 4

Please feel free to share your e-mail address with my office so we can keep you updated on what's new at the Statehouse.



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 Ohio House District 07
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State of Ohio toll-free numbers and websites

Aging, Department of www.state.oh.us/age Golden Buckeye Card Ombudsman/Elder Rights Unit	800-422-1976 800-282-1206	Ohio House of Representatives www.house.state.oh.us Legislative Information	800-282-0253
Attorney General www.ag.state.oh.us Consumer Protection Crime Victim Assistance Patient Abuse & Neglect Hotline	800-282-0515 800-582-CVSS 800-64-ABUSE	Insurance, Department of www.ins.state.oh.us Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program	800-686-1578
Consumers' Counsel, Office of the Ohio www.state.oh.us/cons Utility Consumer Complaints	877-742-5622	Job and Family Services, Department of www.state.oh.us/odjfs Veteran Services Division Unemployment Compensation Hotline	800-253-4060 877-644-6562
Development, Department of www.odod.state.oh.us General Information Business Advocacy Home Energy Assistance Hotline One Stop Business Permit Center Travel & Tourism	800-848-1300 800-345-OHIO 800-282-0880 800-248-4040 800-BUCKEYE	Motor Vehicles, Bureau of www.state.oh.us/odps/division/bmv General Information	800-589-TAGS
Education, Department of www.ode.state.oh.us Child Nutritional Services Information General Education Development Ohio Prevention Education Resources	800-808-MEAL 800-334-6679 800-788-7254	Public Safety, Department of www.state.oh.us/odps Highway Patrol Ohio Road Conditions State Highway Patrol DUI Hotline	877-7-PATROL 888-2OH-ROAD 800-GRAB-DUI
Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.state.oh.us E-Check Information	800-227-8378	Public Utilities Commission of Ohio www.puc.state.oh.us General Information	800-686-PUCO
		Taxation, Department of www.state.oh.us/tax Form Requests Tax Questions	800-282-1782 800-282-1780

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senate Bill 56: A threat to Collective Bargaining

Many Americans live the middleclass dream that was fought and won by the labor movement. Through collective bargaining, labor waged battles to ensure that Americans have workers' compensation, employer provided health care coverage, safe work conditions, a living wage and countless other rights. Millions of Americans who do not belong to unions enjoy these rights—but, if you review your history books, you will learn that the labor movement was a catalyst for ensuring the rights that you and I have today.

However, in the state of Ohio, the labor movement and collective bargaining have been under siege. Last month Senate Bill 56, came to a vote in the Ohio House of Representatives. This bill was used to dismantle collective bargaining rights piece by piece; specifically targeting the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission.

Knowing that this bill would be very controversial, another issue was addressed in this bill—an education funding shortfall for the present school year.

For 2005, the Ohio Department of Education underestimated the amount of students enrolled in Ohio's public schools. This shortfall amounted to \$295 million in funds that must be allocated to our schools. Including two different topics within the same piece of legislation violates Ohio's single subject rule. SB 56, sponsored by a Republican Senator, simultaneously allocated the emergency school funding and denied collective bargaining rights.

Dismantling collective bargaining rights will only put more pressure on the state's safety priorities for Ohio. Governor Taft, himself,

has recently identified escalating Medicaid costs as a “monster” problem and among his top priorities for Ohio.

However, by denying workers the right to bargain for employer provided health care, more people will be joining the 1.3 million Ohioans already without health insurance and increasing the burden on safety net programs, like Medicaid. Welcoming union employers who provide necessary and deserved health care for employees cuts down on Medicaid and welfare costs. We can't let today's “solutions” become tomorrow's nightmares.

Democrats moved to strip the collective bargaining ban from SB 56, and although some Republicans joined them, they still did not have enough votes. Therefore, the bill went to a final vote and passed. So to fix a Republican administration's accounting error of the number of students in Ohio, the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission paid the price by having their collective bargaining rights taken from them.

All who voted against the bill can be interpreted as opponents of school funding. Those legislators who decided to combine these two issues are not in the business of crafting sound policy to lift Ohio out of an education funding crisis, but are using blatant political maneuvers to weaken workers' rights.

This is just one attempt to destroy collective bargaining rights—which have provided the foundation for the Middleclass American dream—a living wage to support your family, worker protection to ensure that you can keep working and health care coverage to keep you and your family healthy.

FIGHTING FOR OHIO'S FAMILIES

'Fighting For Ohio's Families' Tour crosses state

In response to Gov. Taft's budget proposals, the House Democratic caucus recently took its message directly to Ohioans.

Dubbed the “Fighting for Ohio's Families” Tour, numerous caucus members traveled the state to meet with citizens and hear their concerns over the budget, while offering alternatives.

The tour was a great success. We met with large crowds in Cincinnati and Toledo, toured a Youngstown factory with labor leaders, and received significant media attention in the process. We also visited with steelworkers in Lorain, senior citizens and community leaders in Bluffton and Marietta, and college students and concerned citizens in Mansfield and Dayton.

In addition to offering our ideas to people across the state, we also heard from them and gained some valuable insight. Every decision made during a budget year directly affects all Ohioans – from how much money the state spends on education to the amount of money allocated for local governments providing core services like firefighters and public libraries.

The need to balance a budget offers an opportunity for bipartisanship in Columbus. I am fighting for a budget that streamlines government, cuts down on waste and mismanagement and stimulates the economy through job creation and investment in education and technology. It is essential to the state's future that we emerge from this budget crisis stronger and more resilient. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or comments about the budget or any other state matter that concerns you.

Summer Institutes in Science and Computing

OSC (Ohio Supercomputer Center) is a premier statewide supercomputer center that serves as a critical resource in high performance computing, networking, and data storage. As part of its mission, OSC provides reliable high-performance computing and communications for statewide communities including education, research, industry and government. OSC works with Ohio universities and industry to compete nationally for new academic and business opportunities in technology-based research and development efforts.

In addition to its college and university support, OSC is committed to developing the next generation of scientific talent in Ohio. OSC is offering two summer institutes that will help foster a greater understanding of the computational tools necessary to drive future innovation in Ohio.

SI 2004: Pushing the Envelope of Supercomputing is designed to provide the educational opportunity of a lifetime for Ohio's most advanced **high-school freshmen** and **sophomores** to apply high-performance computing to the latest research topics, and **Young Women's Summer Institute (YWSI2005)** is designed to advance computer, math and science skills in **female 6th and 7th grade** students.

You can find further information for both programs by visiting <http://www.osc.edu/education> or calling (614) 292-9248.

