

State of Ohio toll-free numbers and websites

Ohio House of Representatives

www.house.state.oh.us
Legislative Information 800-282-0253

Insurance, Department of

www.ins.state.oh.us
Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program
800-686-1578

Job and Family Services, Department of

www.state.oh.us/odjfs
Veteran Services Division 800-253-4060
Unemployment Compensation Hotline 877-644-6562

Motor Vehicles, Bureau of

www.state.oh.us/odps/division/bmv
General Information 800-589-TAGS

Public Safety, Department of

www.state.oh.us/odps
Highway Patrol 877-7-PATROL
Ohio Road Conditions 888-2OH-ROAD
State Highway Patrol DUI Hotline 800-GRAB-DUI

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 800-282-1782
Tax Questions 800-282-1780

Aging, Department of

www.state.oh.us/age
Golden Buckeye Card 800-422-1976
Ombudsman/Elder Rights Unit 800-282-1206

Attorney General

www.ag.state.oh.us
Consumer Protection 800-282-0515
Crime Victim Assistance 800-582-CVSS
Patient Abuse & Neglect Hotline 800-64-ABUSE

Consumers' Counsel, Office of the Ohio

www.state.oh.us/cons
Utility Consumer Complaints 877-742-5622

Development, Department of

www.odod.state.oh.us
General Information 800-848-1300
Business Advocacy 800-345-OHIO
Home Energy Assistance Hotline 800-282-0880
One Stop Business Permit Center 800-248-4040
Travel & Tourism 800-BUCKEYE

Education, Department of

www.ode.state.oh.us
Child Nutritional Services Information 800-808-MEAL
General Education Development 800-334-6679
Ohio Prevention Education Resources 800-788-7254

Environmental Protection Agency

www.epa.state.oh.us
E-Check Information 800-227-8378

State Representative
Kenny Yuko
Ohio House District 07
77 South High Street
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A Legislative Report from REP. KENNY YUKO



Dear Constituents,

Summer is upon us and lawmakers have departed the Statehouse to spend more time in our districts with our families and the people we serve.

When I am in the capitol, I voice the concerns of the citizens in my district. When I am home, I listen.

You are invited to get in touch with me during this time and pass along opinions about current legislation or other Ohio matters that concern you. As always, I am more than willing to assist you in any way possible.

The summer season also marks the end of the budget process. Since January, the Ohio General Assembly has been working to craft a budget that looks out for all Ohioans.

Unfortunately, the legislature recently passed a flawed budget that favors a select few and shifts even more of the burden onto struggling individuals and families. Ultimately, I could not support this budget and voted "no".

Inside, you'll find some details on the budget package. Also included in this newsletter is an article highlighting the growing controversies surrounding the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation.

I encourage you to share with me your thoughts on these important issues or any others.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

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district07@ohr.state.oh.us

JULY 2005

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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.

NEWS FROM THE DISTRICT

Regina High School 2005 Division III Basketball State Champs resolution presentation

The Royals and head coach Pat Diulus traveled to Columbus to be recognized in session for their fifth state title in six years. They also set two state records in their state tournament winning streak of 10 games.

Team members are:

Alyssa Clark
Monique Godfrey
Carla Jacobs
Emily Hoscilowicz
Avery Hale
Tatianna Hall
Reecy Mitchell
Kalyne Proctor
Shay Selby
Kristina Walton



Members of the State Championship Regina High School basketball team are recognized by Rep. Kenny Yuko on the floor of the Ohio of Representatives.

State budget offers more of the same

Last month, the Ohio House of Representatives approved a two-year \$51.25 billion budget plan. For me, it came down to priorities. I believe Ohio needs a fiscally-disciplined budget reflective of our common interests and values. Unfortunately, the budget plan does not reflect this vision.



And nowhere does this budget fail more miserably than with public education. Flaws in the funding formula continue to hamper our public schools, yet this budget chooses to reward charter schools and voucher programs by expanding their presence in Ohio.

Funding our public schools and improving education is about much more than complying with a Supreme Court mandate—it's about doing what is right for our children and giving them every chance for success.

Our efforts to improve a bad spending plan did pay some dividends. Gone from Gov. Taft's budget proposals are cuts to local governments that would have put cops, firefighters and libraries at risk. Those funds have been restored. We also successfully argued against a 30 percent hike in electricity taxes that would have been extremely detrimental to Ohio's manufacturers and their employees.

But these victories weren't enough. We should not rejoice because this budget is marginally better than the one proposed in April – it still leads us in the wrong direction.

Ohioans deserve a budget that moves Ohio forward for all of us, not just some of us. As it stands, this budget hurts our families and our collective well-being as a state and that is why I voted against it.

BWC UPDATE

Setting the record straight: Where Ohio tax dollars are going

Recently, Ohioans have been flooded with information on failed investments in the state's Bureau of Workers' Compensation. I want to take this opportunity to explain how this situation came to be and what Democrats are doing to make certain this mismanagement never happens again. There are two issues of concern.

One involves the Bureau's unusual decision to invest in rare coins, popularly referred to as 'Coingate.' Thanks to some tough investigative reporting by *The Blade* of Toledo, the public learned in April that, for years, the Bureau had been allowing Tom Noe – a member of the Ohio Board of Regents and Ohio Turnpike Commission – to invest \$50 million of injured workers' funds in rare coins. The newspaper also reported that two state-owned coins worth \$300,000 were missing and that as much as \$12 million of this rare coin investment is unaccounted for.

No other state in the country has chosen to invest public funds in coins, and most experts see coins as an inherently risky investment. For these reasons, many of us immediately questioned why the bureau would choose to make this investment – and whether partisan politics was involved in the decision.

A second issue emerged in June when we learned that the bureau lost \$215 million through a series of extremely risky investments with a Bermuda-based hedge fund.



It turns out that the Bureau's top administrator and at least one member of Governor Bob Taft's inner circle had known about this loss for eight months – but only chose to go public about what happened hours before newspapers were prepared to expose the story.

It's clear that the public trust has been broken in a number of ways. I believe one of the best ways to start restoring the public's confidence would be through an investigation by a full, bipartisan oversight panel – co-chaired by a Democrat and a Republican, and armed with subpoena power. We must thoroughly look into what's gone wrong, make sure all who have done wrong are held accountable and develop a comprehensive set of reforms for preventing such a scandal in the future.

We need to make a greater effort to take more of the money out of politics. The Bureau's decision to allow Tom Noe to invest state money in rare coins was accompanied by thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from Noe to political candidates all over state government. Appearances matter – and the appearance here was of a pay-to-play system that helped a big contributor get special access to a state contract.

I would like to see us consider legislation that would ban any person who does a significant amount of business with the state from donating to any state political campaign. I would also like to see us further limit the amount of money that individuals may give to any candidate for state office. Last year, Republicans here in Columbus pushed through legislation that quadrupled – to \$10,000 – the amount of money that individuals may give to candidates for state office. I strongly believe that legislation was a mistake. Instead, I'd like to see the cap tightened to \$2,000, which would bring Ohio in line with federal limits.

Each day, the media are uncovering new stories about what is clearly one of the biggest scandals to emerge out of state government in many years. But the bottom line is making sure that the system effectively serves injured workers and that it remains affordable for the employers that pay into the system. Reaching those goals means making sure something like this never happens again.