

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
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111



A Legislative Report from REP. KENNY YUKO



Dear Constituents:

The pace of events at the Statehouse usually slows down during the summer months. But this has not been a typical summer.

We now know that for years, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation had been allowing Tom Noe – a former member of the Ohio Board of Regents and Ohio Turnpike Commission – to invest \$50 million of injured workers' funds in rare coins. As much as \$13 million is now missing; the attorney general believes Noe pocketed millions in what he has described as a "Ponzi scheme."

We have also learned that the bureau lost \$215 million through a series of extremely risky investments with a Bermuda-based hedge fund. Some top state officials knew about this loss for months, but only chose to tell the public hours before newspapers were prepared to expose the story.

For the first time in Ohio history, a governor has been charged and convicted of a crime.

These events and others have shocked Ohioans. Ideas for reform are already being put forward, and I expect a great deal of discussion about changes we need to make in order to ensure transparency and accountability in the political process.

In the months ahead, I hope we can craft laws that put an end to secrecy and reassure Ohioans that money and other gifts aren't unduly influencing the policy decisions made by elected officials here in Columbus. As we continue to address these ethical issues, we must also focus our attention on tackling other important tasks like improving education in this state. Please find my thoughts on this matter inside the newsletter.

I invite you to share with me your concerns or ideas on these issues or any other state matter.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

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SEPTEMBER 2005

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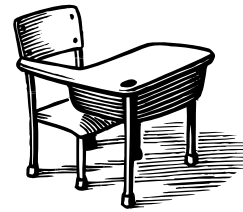
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Please feel free to share your e-mail address with my office so we can keep you updated on what's new at the Statehouse.

EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

Funding for Ohio's public schools must improve

In 1991, a middle school student in Perry County, Ohio took action to improve public school funding in this state. Nathan DeRolph was fed up with the quality of his school district when he was forced to sit on the floor of a classroom because there were not enough desks. He took his frustrations to court and the judges agreed: something needed to change.



In 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court issued the DeRolph decision, which declared our current method of school funding unconstitutional. Now, eight years and four more unconstitutional rulings later, Ohio is still in need of significant reforms to address the inequities and problems of funding our schools. Essentially, an entire generation of Ohio students has been cheated out of a fair funding formula.

Across my district and across this state, citizens inquire about what legislators are doing to improve education. Teachers, parents, students and other residents are concerned with fixing our funding problem and building the best schools in the country. While the Ohio legislature has made some strides in better supporting our system of education, much more work remains ahead of us.



The Ohio General Assembly has committed millions of dollars in construction funds to some of Ohio's school districts. We've added nearly \$2 billion more to education spending since 2001, and support for public schools continues to be the top-funded item in Ohio's \$51 billion budget. Unfortunately, however, we have yet to address some of the real issues that were originally brought forth in the DeRolph case, and in the Supreme Court's four subsequent decisions to declare state funding unconstitutional.

I support legislation and other changes that would correct our spending disparity. First and foremost, I support lifting the burden away from property taxes and ensuring that the legislature commits more resources to education. While local communities and municipalities are instrumental in many aspects of public schooling, this is a statewide problem and it needs a statewide solution.

We won't find a solution, however, while public money—nearly \$250 million per year—is siphoned off from public education and given to charter schools. Charter schools are not accountable to the taxpayers of Ohio and they drain money from our goals of creating a world-class system of education. I oppose their expansion.

Finally, I favor eliminating phantom revenue, which is money that the state assumes each district receives— but is never actually generated— creating less actual dollars for schools to utilize.

Of course adequately funding our public schools and improving education is about much more than complying with a Supreme Court mandate—it's about doing right for our children and giving them every chance for success. Public schooling truly is the great equalizer where all people, regardless of their backgrounds, have an opportunity to learn and to grow. By working together, by continuing a dialogue about how to improve our schools, we can create the best public schools in the country, and give our children the educational opportunities they deserve.



COMMUNITY UPDATE

School year safety tips

It's the time of year when our children return to school, but the kids are not the only ones who need to adjust to new schedules and lessons. We as parents and neighbors are obligated to see that their trip to and from school is safe. Following are a few simple but vital safety tips from the State Highway Patrol to ensure our children's safety.

Drivers need to take that extra minute to check for walking or bicycling children when backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage. Kids dart out between cars into the streets without looking, walk in the street, and horse around near the bus stops. Therefore, when driving, be more alert than ever.



Remember a bus's flashing lights indicate a stop to load or unload children. Slow down and be ready to stop with it when you see the stop arm come out. DO NOT proceed until the lights have stopped, the stop sign is in and the bus is moving again.

Parents have the added responsibility to instruct children about the importance of following school bus safety rules. Teach kids to be safe by:

- getting to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus, standing at least three "giant steps" (six feet) away from the curb, and lining up away from the street.
- waiting until the bus stops, the door opens and the driver says it is safe before stepping onto the bus.
- crossing the street at least five giant steps in front of the bus, in full view of the driver.

Probably the most important rule to stress to a child is staying out of a stranger's car. Tell them, if approached, to make a lot of noise, run and make every attempt to get away from the situation. Then they should report what happened to an adult: Mom, Dad, a police officer or a teacher.

Finally, registering your child's fingerprints is a resource that assists law enforcement in missing children cases. Many local police departments offer these programs during the school year for your convenience. This and many other precautionary steps help keep our children safer during the back-to-school months. Please feel free to pass this information along and help build a sense of community.



Council President Jerry Sustarsic, Phil DiBianca, Councilman Tony Sustarsic and Representative Kenny Yuko attend the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the Briardale Gold Course new Clubhouse in Euclid.