



A Legislative Report from Rep. Kenny Yuko

7th District of Ohio • Cities of Euclid and South Euclid, Richmond Heights and Collinwood



Kenny Yuko
State Representative

Dear Constituents,

My Democratic colleagues and I in the Ohio House recently outlined our "Compact with the Middle Class," designed to promote economic prosperity for all and to stand up for a strong middle class.

The "Compact with the Middle Class" is a combination of principles and legislative initiatives. It includes 10 core principles that will strengthen middle class families, protect local communities and promote economic opportunity for all.

These principles are broad and comprehensive, but reflect the specific situations and circumstances faced by individuals in the district and all across the state.

Below are highlights of the core principles:

Compact with the Middle Class

1. Create, Maintain and Attract Good Paying Jobs
2. Protect the Rights of All Workers
3. Keep College Tuition Affordable
4. Ensure a High Quality Education for All Children
5. Fight for Affordable Healthcare for All Ohioans
6. Protect Consumers and Homeowners
7. Fight Against Cuts to Police, Fire and Other Vital Services
8. Honor Those Who Keep Us Safe
9. Ensure Quality Care for the Elderly and Disabled
10. Protect Ohio's Assets and Natural Resources

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments or suggestions you may have. I know these are difficult times and I am here to listen to your concerns and ideas for improving the state. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

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Legislation on Concussion Education Introduced

Bill would teach young athletes, parents about dangerous of concussions

Young athletes and their parents would be educated about the harmful effects of concussions and young athletes would be allowed to return to play only after being cleared by a licensed physician or athletic trainer, under a bill being considered in the Ohio House.



Risks associated with concussions are greatest when the brain is still developing. Awareness is the pivotal component of this legislation. Educating coaches and parents on concussion symptoms will

lead to better treatment and increase the likelihood of a successful recovery.

Millions of young kids participate in organized sports in this country every year and emergency rooms are dealing with a growing number of concussions and head injuries among children. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, emergency departments treat an estimated 135,000 sports and recreation related traumatic brain injuries, including concussions, among children ages 5 to 18 every year. Children and teens are also more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.

House Bill 143:

- Requires a parent or guardian to sign an information sheet stating that they have reviewed the information provided regarding brain injuries as prepared by the Dept. of Health before that student athlete can participate in practice.
- Requires a coach or organization official to remove a student from play immediately if suspected of having a brain injury. A student athlete who is removed from play due to a suspected brain injury must be cleared by a physician or athletic trainer before returning to play.

- Defines a youth sports organization and requires them to follow standards for removing an athlete suspected of having a head injury. The legislation defines a youth sports organization *as public or nonpublic entity that organizes an athletic activity in which the athletes are age nineteen or younger and are required to pay a fee to participate in the athletic activity or whose cost to participate is sponsored by a business or nonprofit.*

Simple medical guidelines or rules for just high school and middle school student athletes are not enough, backers say.

The bill is similar to the rules already in place through the Ohio High School Athletic Association, but broadens the protection for young people by including coaches and athletes participating in youth sports organizations not affiliated with the OHSAA.



The National Football League and Commissioner Roger Goodell have voiced support for legislation all across the country that seeks to protect youth athletes from concussions, and have endorsed Ohio's legislation.



Former Cincinnati Bengal Eric Ball (right) and former Cleveland Brown Kevin Mack speak in favor of the bill.

Ohio Fights Human Trafficking

Growing movement offers helping-hand to human trafficking victims

Although officially abolished in the United States in 1865, slavery continues today as an illegal enterprise that grosses huge annual profits, second only to the drug trade.

According to the Ohio Trafficking in Persons Study Commission (OTPSC), the United States is the second largest destination country for trafficked persons, and is a large contributor to the world-wide demand that keeps slavery networks busy and the traffickers rich.

Ohio has been identified in numerous human trafficking studies as a problem area in the U.S. because of its proximity to the Canadian border and an advanced highway system. Toledo has been recognized by the FBI as a significant "origin city," meaning pimps are known to recruit from Toledo and move victims to other states for sexual exploitation.

There are approximately 6,000 youths at risk of being trafficked in Ohio. At-risk groups come from a variety of economic, ethnic and national backgrounds and include foreign-born, Ohio-born, domestic violence victims, runaways, and homeless youth from urban, rural and suburban areas, according to the OTPSC.

Most victims of slave trade are recruited for the purposes of commercial sex (46% according to the U.S. Justice Department) and cheap labor. They are often promised financial opportunity and success, or are coerced through threat of violence into following a trafficker's demands.



Awareness of this issue has steadily increased in recent years, thanks to the valiant efforts of organizations and advocacy groups committed to grassroots efforts and targeted campaigns to bring human trafficking to light.

In Ohio, a number of groups are working to help remove human trafficking victims from hostile environments and into safe houses, where shelter, education, and mental and physical treatment are available. The number of victims far exceeds available beds at shelters in Ohio.

Ohio recently joined 44 other states in recognizing human trafficking as a stand-alone offense. Senate Bill 235 was approved with bipartisan support in the legislature and signed into law by the governor.

New efforts focus on essential services to help victims re-enter society.

"The Safe Harbor Act" was recently introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives and seeks to change how child prostitution cases are handled in Ohio.

The bill would ensure that minor victims of human trafficking are offered the essential rehabilitative services they need for recovery, opposed to incarceration, as the current law provides.

The "Safe Harbor Act" is the next in a series of steps to combat human trafficking and bring more justice and dignity to the victims of this crime.

Ohio Anti-human trafficking Organizations

GraceHaven

The Central Ohio Rescue &
Restore Coalition

Doma International

End Slavery Cincinnati

The Collaborative Initiative to
End Human Trafficking

Polaris Project

Not for Sale Campaign

Weed & Seed

The New Abolitionist
Movement

Second Chance Toledo

The Lucas County Human
Trafficking Coalition

State Help Available For Decisions on Long Term Care

State Ombudsman can help with selections and information on your rights

Ohioans should expect excellence and choices in long-term care.

If you're like most Ohioans, at some point, you or a family member will need long-term care. In fact, seven out of 10 people over the age of 65 will require some long-term care services.

The good news is that long-term care is changing for the better and Ohio's state long-term care ombudsman is part of this positive movement. The state's long-term care ombudsman serves as the voice of Ohio consumers and advocates for quality care for individuals receiving home care, assisted living and nursing home care.

Ombudsmen are advocates who provide a voice to the needs and preferences of clients. Ombudsmen link residents with services or agencies, offer advice on selecting long-term care providers, inform consumers about their rights and provide information and assistance with benefits and insurance.

Ombudsmen do not "police" nursing homes and home health agencies. Instead, they work with providers, residents, their families and other representatives to resolve problems and concerns.

If you are in need of long-term care services, the state ombudsman suggests that you search for providers that advertise the types of services you are looking for. Ohio providers offer a large range of services from home-first programs to community living options.



There are many different approaches to care in the nursing home world – person-centered care, Eden, Green House, Small House. Lingo aside, what we're really talking about is creating a home full of choices wherever a consumer wants to live.

To find a provider that creates such an environment, expect excellence. Residents should be able to spend their day as they would have before they moved, by participating in activities such as gardening, reading, cooking or even bird watching.

Look for a provider that gives consumers meal choices and consistent assignment of staff. This allows staff to get to know the resident's likes and dislikes as well as form friendships. The provider should also engage those caretakers and the resident in care planning. The last thing you want when you visit a provider is to feel like you are visiting an institution.

Both the private sector and government organizations have joined together to help providers change the way they serve you by providing resources and education for nursing homes.

Many person-centered practices don't cost more; in fact, there is a business case for culture change, whether by making the home more attractive and increasing occupancy and revenue or by making operations more efficient and reducing staff turnover.

Who can call the Ombudsman Program?

Anyone may call the Ombudsman. There is no requirement to speak with another agency or the provider first.

How does the Ombudsman Program work for you?

The Ombudsman handles complaints about long-term care services and serves as a liaison voicing the needs and concerns of the consumer to providers of long-term care.

What should I do if I have a complaint?

First, you may wish to address your concern to the provider. If you are unable to solve the problem yourself, your regional ombudsman can help. Your call will be confidential, and they will not act without consulting you and involving you in the resolution process.

For more information:

Call **1-800-282-1206**

Ohio House Honors Fallen Soldiers

Lawmakers Award 190 Ohioans the State Military Medal of Distinction for Their Sacrifice



For every major conflict in which the United States has been involved, Ohioans have bravely answered the call to duty. Ohio's sons and daughters have served honorably and paid dearly— putting themselves in harms way, spending precious time away from loved ones and sustaining injury both physical and mental.

Some have paid the ultimate price to protect the freedoms we enjoy as residents of Ohio and citizens of the United States.

In 2008, looking for a way to honor this great sacrifice, the Ohio General Assembly passed a bill to establish the Ohio Military Medal of Distinction. This honor is posthumously awarded to fallen soldiers in recognition of their courage, dedication and sacrifice.

Members of the Ohio General Assembly awarded this medal to 190 Ohioans who have lost their lives since September 11, 2001 fighting bravely and selflessly for our country.

The Ohio Military Medal of Distinction features a gold star replicated from the gold star service flag, which has been displayed in the homes of fallen service members since World War I.

Each point on the star represents the five branches of service in which Ohio's men and women serve: Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. The wreath of laurel signifies the most honorable endeavor of the fallen service member. The colors of red, white and blue are symbolic of the United States Flag and the State of Ohio Burgee. Red commemorates valor and patriotism, while blue honors the loyalty and devotion of the fallen hero. White represents the innocence of lives lost and grey portrays the grief suffered by the family.



Women In Combat Resolution Considered by Ohio House

New realities of war mean ban should be lifted; training & requirements should be equal

The Ohio House is considering a resolution urging Congress and the military to:

- Lift the ban on women serving in combat
- Provide women members of the armed services adequate combat training before deployment
- Issue sufficient quantities of equipment to female service members, in sizes that are fit for practical use.

Pentagon rules state that women may not be assigned to ground combat units. However, the nature of recent wars including Iraq and Afghanistan has made the differences between front-line and rear areas less distinct. As a result, American military women are constantly under fire, yet are treated differently under armed forces rules including training and fitness standards than men. The Military Leadership Diversity Commission has concluded that it is time to eliminate barriers based on gender.

Did you know that ...

- American women have been serving in combat since the days of our Revolution?
- Women comprise 14% of our armed forces?
- More than 225,000 women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan?
- 110 women have been killed in the war in Iraq, and 24 in Afghanistan?
- The Armed Services have skirted the combat exclusion law by attaching women to combat units without formally recognizing their assignment – women have already and repeatedly been in combat without being recognized for it?



Ohio Statehouse Celebrates 150 Years in 2011

Sesquicentennial celebration to include events, re-enactments and exhibits

After 22 years of construction, the Ohio Statehouse was completed in 1861 at the beginning of the American Civil War. One hundred and fifty years later, the Ohio Statehouse continues to serve as the heart of Ohio democracy.

The Statehouse is considered to be one of the most significant architectural accomplishments of the early republic. Its Greek Revival Doric architectural details and proportions give the impression of permanence, elegance and grandeur deserved by the original State Legislature who passed a law on January 26, 1838 to build the new Statehouse. Restored to its 1861 appearance, the Ohio Statehouse maintains its historic character as it continues to function as the center of state government in Ohio.

The Ohio Statehouse will host a variety of special events, re-enactments and exhibits throughout 2011 to celebrate the sesquicentennial of Ohio's Capitol Building. The events will commemorate the lasting legacy and history of the Ohio Statehouse.

