



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,

The legislature recently approved and the Governor signed a new state budget for the next two years. It calls for spending \$55.8 billion in General Revenue Funds in 2012 and 2013.

I voted against this spending plan for a number of reasons. I believe it will hurt middle class families, especially with deep cuts to local communities and schools. This generally leaves two choices: raise local taxes or cut services. We are already seeing towns and school districts in Ohio moving to ask for additional tax money to offset these cuts, which only passes the buck on higher spending from the state to the local level.

The Republicans' budget cuts funding to schools by \$780 million (Columbus Dispatch, 7/12/11). These cuts will likely result in fewer teachers, larger classes for our children or more school levies and higher local property taxes.

Severe cuts to schools could result in student-teacher ratios of 50 to 1, according to Gov. Kasich's top education policy advisor (Columbus Dispatch, 3/24/11).

On average, these cuts mean that districts will have to either raise an additional 1.59 mills to make up the difference or drastically cut education services to their children. According to Innovation Ohio, these cuts could impact 7,149 teachers and would likely result in significant layoffs.

It's not just schools that will be forced to choose between reduced services or increased taxes. The budget cuts over \$455 million (25 percent in 2012 and 50 percent in 2013) from local governments.

There are other problems that I see with this budget as well, which made my decision to vote against it relatively simple.

This is not the way to move Ohio forward.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments or suggestions you may have. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

CONTACT

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August 2011

Bath Salt Ingredients the Latest Drug Craze

Ohio Legislature approves measure to take products off store shelves

You wouldn't normally associate a relaxing hot bath with a narcotic drug, but experts have found that some products sold as "bath salts" contain ingredients that are nothing more than legally sanctioned narcotics available in many stores.

The Ohio House has approved and the Governor signed legislation that will take this new drug craze off the shelves. It adds six ingredients found in these bath salts (which have very little to do with what you might put in your bathtub) to a list of Schedule 1 controlled substances. The ingredients are synthetic derivatives of Cathinone, a chemical already designated as a hallucinogenic narcotic.

When ingested, usually by snorting, smoking, injection or even mixed with water as a beverage, these highly-addictive substances can trigger extreme paranoia, hallucinations, delusions, hypertension and suicidal thoughts.

The penalty for possessing or selling these drugs will now be the same as for marijuana. Possession is a minor misdemeanor, but anyone caught trafficking near a school or children faces a fifth degree felony.

In 2010 there were 233 report calls to U.S. Poison Control Centers for the ingestions of the chemicals most commonly found in these products. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, there more bath salt linked calls in January, 2011 alone than in all of last year.

The products are being sold under names such as "Ivory Wave," "White Lightening," and "Hurricane Charlie."

Emergency room physician and medical director of the Oregon Poison Center Dr. Zane Horowitz told WebMD, "It's confusing. Is this what we put in our bathtubs, like Epsom salts? No. But by marketing



Photo courtesy Marion Police Department

them as bath salts and labeling them 'not for human consumption,' they have been able to avoid them being specifically enumerated as illegal."

They are widely available at neighborhood stores and over the internet, and generally cost around \$20 to \$50. They usually include the phrase "not for human consumption," which is also often ignored. The Drug Enforcement Administration does

not currently regulate these substances, but they are under federal scrutiny, as the effects of these bath salts are comparable to methamphetamine abuse, according to poison control centers and other law enforcement agencies.

Several other states including Mississippi and Kentucky, Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, and North Dakota are already working on ban similar to the one being considered in Ohio.

Media reports in Mississippi said the state's poison control center received more than 125 calls in a three month period involving exposure to the chemicals.

The U.S. Department of Justice finds that male and female abusers of these substances range from teenagers to those in their 40s, often with an extensive history of drug abuse. Some abusers describe the effects as similar to methamphetamine, ecstasy, and cocaine, and one referred to the substances as "complete crank" while others used the term "fake cocaine."



Photo courtesy DEA

Ohio House Passes Bills to Help Students With Dyslexia

The Ohio House of Representatives recently passed two bills created to assist children with dyslexia. House bills 96 and 157 add clarifying language to Ohio Law to insure that students with dyslexia are offered equal opportunities to learn and excel.

HB 96 adds dyslexia to the definition of learning disabilities in Ohio Law and creates a pilot project to provide early screening and intervention services for children with the disorder. HB 157 allows schools to incorporate special teaching techniques and procedures geared towards students with Dyslexia by having dyslexia specialists train K-4 teachers on the indicators of dyslexia and the types of instruction that children with the disorder need.

Supporters of the bills contend that providing resources to identify children with learning disabilities at an early age will ensure that students receive the appropriate education needed to become successful far beyond the classroom.

According to the International Dyslexia Association, dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. As much as 15-20% of the population has a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia is not a disease, so there is no cure, but with a proper diagnosis, appropriate instruction, hard work and support, people who have dyslexia can succeed in school and work.

The Ohio Department of Education would oversee the pilot project, which would include one urban school district, one suburban, and one rural district to forge a partnership with the local library system to provide early screening and intervention services for children with dyslexia.

The goal of the pilot project is to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs for children with dyslexia and to evaluate whether those programs can reduce future special education costs. After three school years, a report will be submitted to the General Assembly with the results



Above is an example of new innovative approaches for helping children with Dyslexia: associate letters with their appropriate sounds.

of the project and legislative recommendations whether to continue, expand, or make changes to the project.

HB 157 also offers a legal definition of dyslexia, a definition needed in order to create policies and laws that target this specific disorder. HB157 defines Dyslexia as "specific neurological

learning disorder that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language."

The bill would allow school districts to require training for its K-4 teachers on ways to identify children with the disorder, and the best and most effective approach for teaching them. This training would be provided by local educational service centers that meet the standards for dyslexia training set by the International Dyslexia Association.

Together, HBs 96 and 157 set the foundation for an educational system that adopts scientifically verified approaches to educating students with special needs. Both bills emphasize the need for early identification and intervention, an approach that will likely help students struggling with dyslexia get the head start they need for overcoming some of the difficulties associated with their disorder.

Did you know?

According to the International Dyslexia Association, it is a myth that people with Dyslexia read backwards. Dyslexia makes it difficult for the brain to remember what sounds correspond to what letters and what letter groups denote specific words.

Summer assistance available for low-income households

State program can help you pay your summer cooling bill

Help is available for eligible Ohioans trying to cope with the summer heat. Under the 2010 - 2011 Summer Crisis Program, one-time payments of up to \$175 can be used toward household electric bills.

It is estimated that one in nine Ohio residential utility consumers experienced a disconnection of either their electric or gas service for non-payment in the past year. While a disconnection notice is not required, assistance is available for households with an annual income that is at or below 200 percent of the 2011 federal poverty guidelines.

In addition to the income guidelines, applicants must also:

- Have a member in the household who is 60 years of age or older; or
- Have a member who has a medical necessity verified by physician documentation.

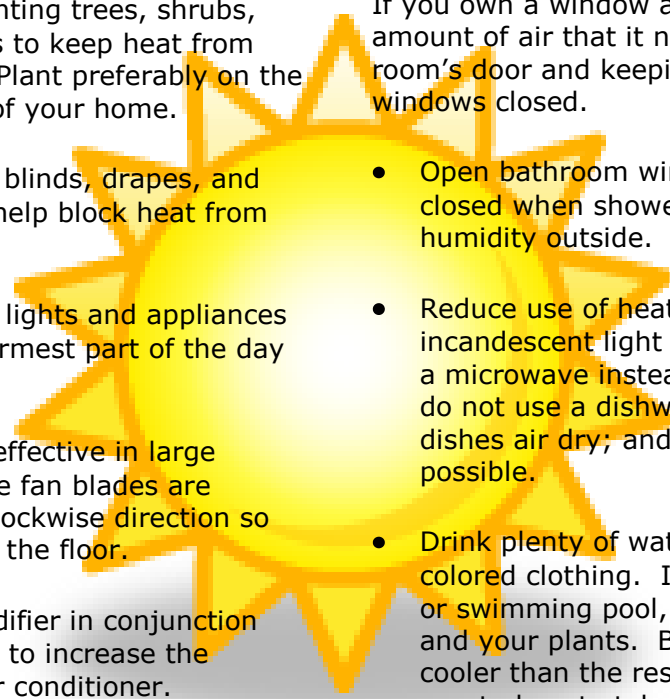
To apply for the Summer Crisis Program, consumers need to contact their local community action agency. The community action agency determines the level of benefits that can be provided.

The program is available from July 1 until August 31, 2011. For additional information or to locate the nearest community action agency, contact the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) consumer hotline at 1-800-282-0880 or TDD 1-800-686-1557 or via the Internet at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov.

For additional information on all available assistance programs or to obtain help in avoiding a disconnection, consumers should contact the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) toll free at 1-877- PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) or visit the OCC website at www.pickocc.org.

Beat the Heat

Summer Cooling Tips from the Office of Ohio Consumers' Counsel

- Exterior shading – planting trees, shrubs, and tall plants – works to keep heat from reaching your home. Plant preferably on the south and west sides of your home.
 - Interior shading – like blinds, drapes, and window treatments – help block heat from entering your home.
 - Reduce the number of lights and appliances you use during the warmest part of the day to keep heat down.
 - Ceiling fans are most effective in large rooms – make sure the fan blades are moving in a counter-clockwise direction so that air blows towards the floor.
 - Use a fan and dehumidifier in conjunction with an air conditioner to increase the effectiveness of the air conditioner.
- If you own a window air conditioner, reduce the amount of air that it needs to cool by closing the room's door and keeping windows closed.
- Open bathroom windows and keep the door closed when showering to vent the heat and humidity outside.
 - Reduce use of heat producers: turn off incandescent light bulbs and electronics; use a microwave instead of a conventional oven; do not use a dishwasher's dry cycle – let the dishes air dry; and air dry clothes when possible.
 - Drink plenty of water. Wear loose, light-colored clothing. If you cannot get to a lake or swimming pool, let a sprinkler water you and your plants. Basements are usually cooler than the rest of the house and are a great place to take refuge from the heat.
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Legislative Survey

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY YUKO
AUGUST 2011

Your views on issues facing state government are important to me. Please take the time to share your opinion on the following topics. I look forward to hearing from you!

1. Do you believe it would be a good idea to shorten the number of days voters can vote early in-person or by mail?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

If so, list them:

2. Do you support a statewide ban on texting while driving?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

3. Do you believe that when the state enters into a public-private partnership, records should be open to the public to see how state dollars are spent?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

4. Should Ohio's state parks be open to oil and natural gas drilling?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

5. Should guns be permitted in places such as bars or college campuses?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

6. Should Ohio end binding-arbitration with public employee unions?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

7. Do you support saving Ohio money by sending some non-violent offenders to community corrections facilities and programs instead of state prisons?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

8. Please list what you believe to be three of Ohio's biggest strengths:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Additional Comments:

Please fold and return this form to me at the address listed on the other side.

If you would like to receive my e-newsletter and other legislation information, please provide your email address:

Name _____

E Mail Address _____



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**Thank you for completing this legislative survey.
Please don't hesitate to contact my office
with any issues or opinions you may have!**

FOLD UNDER AND SECURE WITH TAPE

(PLEASE FILL IN YOUR ADDRESS)

PLACE STAMP
HERE
POST OFFICE
WILL NOT
DELIVER
WITHOUT
PROPER
POSTAGE

Hon. Kenny Yuko
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