



# 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,

One of the biggest jobs here at the Statehouse every two years is the state budget. That plan determines the priorities of your state government, as well as which programs and services will continue and which will be cut or eliminated.

My responsibility as we debate the budget is to protect you, and make sure the budget isn't balanced on the backs of middle-class Ohioans.

After studying the proposal, I am convinced that the budget priorities would hurt middle-class families. It does not create jobs, but passes the buck on saving money in a fiscally irresponsible way. It is likely to create a situation where your local taxes may go up to make up for state cuts.

The Governor claims the budget doesn't raise state taxes, but Ohio's Buckeye Institute agrees that this pass-the-buck budgeting could mean tax hikes at the local level: "Our belief is that eliminating a tax 'here' that pops up again over 'there' simply rearranges the chairs on the deck of the Titanic."

The budget proposes to cut funding for our schools and their students by \$3.1 billion. This could result in fewer teachers and larger classes for students or more school levies and higher property taxes.

According to the Ohio Association of School Business Administrators in a recent memo to Superintendents, "The \$3.1 billion loss in funding cannot be absorbed without major cuts to programs and staff over the next two years. While school districts had been preparing for a reduction in state aid, the realities of this proposal are alarming. Districts will be forced to shift a bigger burden of the cost of funding their education programs to local taxpayers, while the public is being told that state funding for education is increasing."

As the debate over the budget continues, know that I am working on your behalf so that Ohio has a spending plan that protects the middle class and helps, instead of hurts, our economic recovery.

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

## CONTACT

### Columbus Office

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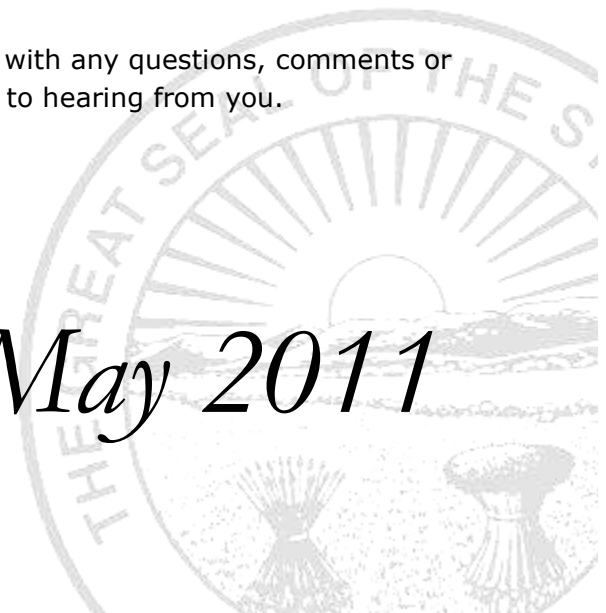
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Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko  
State Representative

May 2011



## 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

## Legislation Protects Your Right to Vote

*Poll worker error should not keep your ballot from being counted*

When you go to the polls to vote, you have a responsibility to show up at the right polling place, and the Board of Elections has a responsibility to count your vote.

Sometimes, your name doesn't show up on the precinct's voter rolls (for example if you've recently moved). You might be asked to fill out what is called a "provisional ballot," which will be counted once the situation is resolved.

But occasionally, people show up in the right location, but are directed by poll workers to the wrong precinct or sign-in table. Or perhaps the voter shows up in the wrong place and is not told to go to the correct building which might be nearby. While mistakes are rare, they can happen. And in a state with 5 or 6 million people voting, these relatively rare errors can add up!

A bill pending in the Ohio House would make sure provisional ballots are counted if they are cast in the correct polling location but in the wrong precinct. It would ensure that a voter isn't punished because of a poll worker's failure to direct the voter to the correct building or sign-in table.

Sponsors say it is unacceptable that we do anything less than go full measure to ensure every voter's ballot is counted. Looking for opportunities to exclude ballots is a direct assault on our democratic process and the rights of all citizens of this state.

The bill will also make state standards uniform across Ohio. Currently, different counties use different criteria for deciding whether a provisional ballot should be counted. And the courts have issued conflicting opinions because of the lack of a statewide

standard.

Poll workers provide a great public service, but they are human and we all make mistakes. You should not lose your right to vote because someone else makes a mistake.

There is already a form printed on provisional ballot envelopes that a poll worker is required to complete. But the current form does not collect the information that would allow full time election workers to later determine whether the poll worker sent the voter to the right place and, ultimately, whether the ballot should be counted. This bill simply revises that form to capture this essential info.



Ohio is sadly one of the least voter-friendly states in the country. Ohio accounts for about 15% of the total number of ballots that are thrown out for this particular technicality and we can do much better. A state with as proud a history as Ohio has in our country's democracy ought to have a much better record of counting its citizens votes. The U.S. constitution requires we treat all equally. The bill outlines a way for boards of

election to correct innocent errors and count only those votes on the ballot for the races the voter was eligible to vote in. So no one can go across town and vote in someone else's school levy.

This is a simple fix to a major problem that has cost Ohio hundreds of thousands of dollars in litigation over excluded votes, not to mention the toll this takes on the public's confidence in our elections. In a time when we do not have a dollar to spare on such matters, it is time to end this needless hassle for voters and election workers.

## House Democrats “Compact with the Middle Class”

### Protect the Rights of All Workers

Protect the rights of all workers to join together to collectively bargain for wages, benefits and terms of employment. Fight the passage of SB 5, an unprecedented attack on working families which will remove the careful balance that currently exists between management and employees.



### Keep College Tuition Affordable

Keep tuition affordable so our young people are not forced out of state, while better utilizing our community colleges to re-train unemployed workers for jobs currently available. Fight to avoid a return to the past cycles of spiraling tuition costs.

### Fight for Affordable Healthcare for All Ohioans

Fight for affordable healthcare for all Ohioans, while protecting Medicaid coverage for our most vulnerable citizens. Preserve previous gains such as lowering the cost of open enrollment for people with pre-existing conditions and allowing young adults to remain on their parent’s insurance plan until age 28. Protect Medicaid optional services for those who are most in need.



### Ensure a High Quality Education for all Children

Ensure quality education by adequately funding our public schools and reducing reliance on local property taxes. Fight cuts in funding for pre-K and the elimination of all-day Kindergarten.



### Create, Maintain & Attract Good Paying Jobs

Work to preserve current initiatives like the wind and solar tax credits, the film tax credit and the Third Frontier. Pursue additional job creation initiatives such as HB 43, the expansion of the Venture Capital Authority and HB 44.



### Ensure Quality Care for Older & Disabled Ohioans

Pursue policies which would enable family members to care for their loved ones at home while expanding assisted living care in Ohio’s communities. Ensure our parents and grandparents are given excellent care and treated with the respect they deserve by adequately funding nursing homes.

### Fight Against Cuts to Police, Fire and Other Vital Services

Fight state policies which would force local governments to cut vital services like police and fire protection, snow removal and garbage pickup. Stop pass-the-buck budgeting by protecting local governments from drastic cuts which will force them to raise property and income taxes.



### Protect Consumers & Homeowners

Protect consumers and homeowners from those who try to take advantage of them. Continue to fight to help homeowners and renters remain in their homes and avoid foreclosure. Protect consumers from scams, rip-offs, and predatory lending practices.



### Honor Those Who Keep Us Safe

Protect the rights of our military retirees who live and work in Ohio with bills like HB 106. Enable service members to do their jobs without worrying about their rental payments and allow women who desire to serve their country to do so fully and completely.



### Protect Ohio’s Assets and Natural Resources

Protect our parks, lakes, rivers, forests and green areas. Fight to stop the sale of our state’s assets for one-time money.

# Legislative Survey

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY YUKO  
MAY 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. Are there any areas of state spending that should be protected from budget cuts?**

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

If so, list them:

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

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

**3. Should partnerships between Ohio government and the private sector be subject to public record laws?**

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

**4. Do you believe all day kindergarten should be a priority for Ohio schools?**

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

**5. Should Ohio maintain a social service safety net to protect its most vulnerable citizens?**

- 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:**

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*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!**

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(PLEASE FILL IN YOUR ADDRESS)

PLACE STAMP  
**HERE**  
POST OFFICE  
WILL NOT  
DELIVER  
WITHOUT  
PROPER  
POSTAGE

Hon. Kenny Yuko  
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