In the District

I will be hosting a series of town hall meetings/community forums to help keep the citizens of the 07th District informed of what's going on at the Statehouse and in our community. Please see the dates below. I hope to see you there!

When: February 6, 2006 6 pm to 8 pm **Where:** Richmond Heights Kiwanis Lodge 27285 Highland Road Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143	**When:** February 27, 2006 6 pm to 8 pm **Where:** Lakeshore Golden Age Center 16600 Lakeshore Blvd. Cleveland, Ohio 44110
When: February 13, 2006 6 pm to 8 pm **Where:** Euclid Public Library 631 East 222nd Street Euclid, Ohio 44123	**When:** March 6, 2006 6 pm to 8 pm **Where:** South Euclid Community Center 1370 Victory Drive Cleveland, Ohio 44121

State Representative
Kenny Yuko
Ohio House District 07
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111

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.

A Legislative Report from Rep. Kenny Yuko

Representing the 7th District of Ohio • Cities of Euclid, Richmond Heights, and Parts of Cleveland

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

Dear Constituents,

The arrival of a new year brings with it an opportunity for renewal and building for the future.

After hundreds of thousands of lost jobs and wages that have fallen below the national average, Ohio's families find themselves on an economic treadmill – working longer hours, taking home less money and spending less time with their families.

Government has a vital role to play in helping its citizens get ahead. State government should spend our tax dollars as wisely and carefully as Ohio's families do. That's not partisan politics, it's just common sense. It's time to put families first – instead of catering to powerful special interests.

In the forthcoming year, the House of Representatives will be wrestling with several important public policy questions and addressing proposals to produce savings or create more accountability in health care, energy costs, job creation and education.

Furthermore, we are building a comprehensive plan to address corruption in Columbus and restore public trust in government. Our state deserves a government as honest as the people who live here.

However you choose to celebrate this winter season, I wish you and yours the very best. Season's Greetings and have a happy, healthy New Year!

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

CONTACT

77 South High Street
District 07
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111
(614) 466-8012
(800) 282-0253
district07@ohr.state.oh.us

JANUARY 2006

Dear Constituents 1
Legislative Perspective 2
Legislative Perspective 3
In the District 4

Legislative Perspective

Ohio heat assistance programs

Despite best efforts to curb heating costs, some Ohioans find it difficult to pay ever-increasing utility bills. There is help for those who need it.

You may be able to cut your heating costs by participating in Ohio's **Gas Choice Program**. Contact the Consumers' Council toll-free at 1-877-742-5622 or visit www.pickocc.org for more information.

Last year, more than 257,000 lower-income Ohio households relied on help from **Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP),** to assist them in paying heating bills through the winter. Contact the state HEAP office toll-free number: 1-800-282-0880, or download an application at www.odod.state.oh.us.

A **Percentage of Income Plan** allows you, if qualified, to make gas and electric payments based on a percentage of household income.

The former Ohio Energy Credit Program (OEC) now provides a one-time cash payment or credit to qualified elderly or disabled individuals.

The **Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)** helps low-income homeowners and renters reduce energy consumption while increasing the comfort of their homes. For details, visit www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization. For assistance in the state of Ohio, call 1-866-728-6749.

December 1 designated 'Rosa Parks Day' in Ohio

"**THE** only thing that bothered me was that we waited so long to make this protest"
-Rosa Parks

The Ohio House of Representatives recently voted to designate December 1 as "Rosa Parks Day" in the State of Ohio. The legislation, sponsored by Assistant Minority Leader Joyce Beatty, D-Columbus, passed without opposition 94-0. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Ohio becomes the first state in the Union to permanently observe Rosa Parks' courageous refusal to give up her seat on a public bus during the era of Jim Crow laws.

Most historians date the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the United States to Dec. 1, 1955, the day Rosa Parks, an unknown seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to give-up her bus seat. A young pastor named Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. assisted in forming the Montgomery Improvement Association, which called for a boycott of the city-owned bus company. The boycott lasted 381 days. Their cause persuaded the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down the Montgomery ordinance that outlawed racial segregation on public transportation. Ms. Parks died on October 24, 2005, at the age of 92.

Tip of the Month:
Save money and stay warm

Keep your energy bill and your pollution output low this winter by taking a whole-house approach to heating. Start with setting your thermostat as low as is comfortable. A programmable thermostat can help by adjusting the temperature according to your schedule-it can cut back heating at night, for instance, and turn it up again before you rise in the morning. It's also important to weatherize your home—caulk and weatherstrip any doors and windows that leak air. Make sure your equipment is properly maintained and cleaned, and that furnace filters are replaced regularly. Finally, insulation is inadequate in many homes. Check the insulation in your attic, ceilings, exterior and basement walls, floors, and crawl spaces to see if it meets the levels recommended for your area.
-Courtesy of the U.S. Department of Energy

Legislative Update

Every once in awhile, I like to inform my constituents of important bills that have successfully passed a full vote or are still under consideration before the House of Representatives. This month, I have included bills with topics as far-reaching as veterans' affairs, domestic violence guidelines, Ohio's economic/employment future, and consumer credit protection. Would you like to know more about bills currently before the legislature? A searchable Internet database from the Legislative Service Commission offers you an easy way to find out if the General Assembly is tackling an issue that you feel is important. You can also search by individual legislator to determine what issues are making waves around the state. Check it out at: www.legislature.state.oh.us/search.cfm

House Bill 11—Enacted into law just last month, this bill permits school districts to give high school diplomas to **veterans of the Vietnam War**. Previously, the law only granted high school diplomas to those who had served in WWII or the Korean War. I believe it is important for us to show our sincerest gratitude to those who sacrificed in our armed forces during such a difficult time for our nation, and I am pleased that we are showing our appreciation to those veterans who left high school to serve.

Substitute House Bill 29—This bill was enacted in May of 2005, and became enforceable in August. To summarize, this law requires a person who is accused of a **domestic violence-related crime** to appear in court before bail can be set. This measure was crafted in response to cases where those who were committing acts of domestic violence were given no special treatment at the time of bail setting, and thus were allowed to be back on the street only hours after being arrested. Seeing the grave danger this posed for the victim and other related parties, the legislature acted to ensure that such a person would be required to appear before any bail or release would be granted. This measure will also hopefully give victims time to secure safe lodging and/or leave the dangerous situation, as hearings do not always happen at the quickest pace. This bill is a good example of finding a common-sense solution to an important problem, without sacrificing any rights of the accused.

House Bill 437—This legislation, still currently being considered in the State Government committee of the House of Representatives, requires that all Dept. of Natural Resources and State Gift Shop supply purchases come from Ohio vendors. A bill such as this is an important message to be sending to potential employers inside and outside the state: *"We want to support Ohio companies and small businesses!"* While it is not always possible to "**Buy Ohio**," it is important to make a point of looking for Ohio products before all others. If we're going to turn our economy around, we need to have the support of our business community!

House Bill 339— This bill is a key tool in the fight against **identity theft**. It enables Ohioans to place a security "freeze" on their credit files – thus, making it harder for potential thieves to access this vital information. The security freeze helps consumers stop thieves from getting credit in their names by locking, or freezing, access to the consumer credit report and credit score. Without this information, a business will not issue new credit to a thief. When the consumer wants to get new credit, they can use a PIN, established by the consumer or identity theft victim, to unlock access to the credit file. Ohioans currently can sign up for a fraud "alert" from credit bureaus, but consumers have no way of knowing if this is working, and creditors aren't required to abide by or even check the alert.