



A Legislative Report from Rep. Kenny Yuko

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



Kenny Yuko
State Representative

Dear Constituents,

Our economy is mired in a tough slowdown. Foreclosure rates are soaring. The stock market rides a daily roller coaster and sky-high oil values are driving up prices at the gas pump. Many Ohioans feel it is hard enough *making* enough money, but it can be even harder to *manage* the money you have. Sound financial decision-making is more critical than ever.

Congress designated April as "Financial Literacy Month" to give Americans pause to focus on making good decisions with our money. A lot is at stake: Without proper money management, health care, daily living expenses, educational opportunities and retirement savings are all put at risk. Educating yourself – and knowing where to turn for help if you have trouble – is key.

This edition of the *Legislative Report* spotlights programs here in Ohio designed to help residents get their financial houses in order.

Financial literacy tops the agenda. State Treasurer Richard Cordray has launched a website (www.yourmoneynowonline.org) that offers useful tips for handling money based on your specific needs.

The Treasurer is also helping distribute an interactive video game called "Financial Football" to Ohio high schools. It uses an NFL theme to train students in personal finance. It's modeled for teenagers, but it can also be a fun refresher course for adults. You can play the game for free online by visiting either of these websites: www.practicalmoneyskills.com/football or www.ohiotreasurer.gov.

The *Legislative Report* also highlights a new foreclosure prevention public awareness campaign called "Save the Dream" that aims to reverse the dangerous tide of foreclosures that continues to hammer our state.

We in the Ohio House are working constantly to improve the state's economic standing, and I welcome any comments or ideas you may have.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

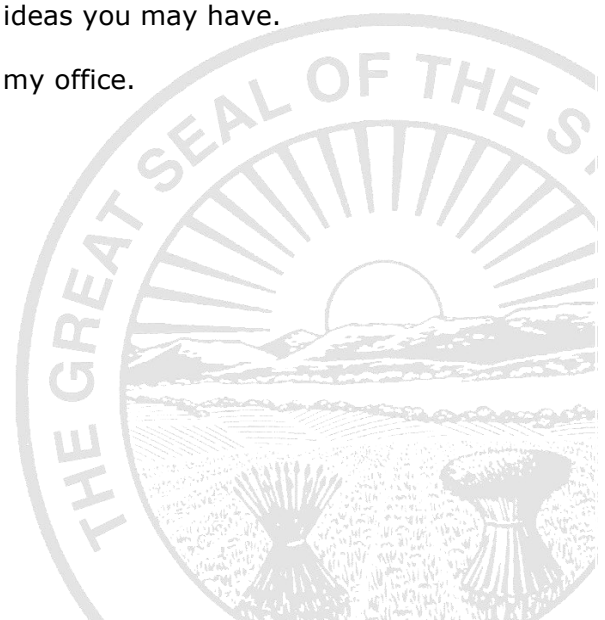
CONTACT

Columbus Office

7th District
77 South High Street
11th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Phone: (614) 466-8012
Toll-free: (800) 282-0253
Fax: (614) 719-0007

Or E-mail At:
district07@ohr.state.oh.us



Contacting Your State Legislator

"As your representative in the Statehouse, part of my job is to stand up for your interests. Whether this is done with a vote on an important piece of legislation or with a phone call to an agency or department on your behalf, I am your voice in the state capital."

For lawmakers, it is very important to know the opinions of constituents regarding pressing matters that come before the legislature. It does not matter how many town hall meetings are attended or how many local newspapers are read, it would be impossible to have all the information necessary to make good decisions without regular citizen input!"

—State Rep. Kenny Yuko

To contact your legislator's office, there are several options for you to choose from.

Via Telephone (Columbus Office)

This is the office at the Statehouse. All legislative staff in the General Assembly are equipped to deal with almost any issue, or can find the best person to help you if you have a problem needing attention. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday thru Friday, and the office is closed on Saturday and Sunday. The best way to contact this office is via phone:

Direct Phone: (614) 466-8012

Toll-Free Messaging System: (800) 282-0253

Direct Fax: (614) 719-0007

Via Electronic Mail (E-Mail)

To contact the office via e-mail, please use the following address: district07@ohr.state.oh.us.

Office staff checks this e-mail account daily to make sure they are staying in touch with the constituents of the 7th district. On occasion, you may receive a response from a legislative staff member if a simple answer or solution is included in your initial opinion letter or request for assistance.

Via Postal Mail

Don't have a computer? No problem! The old-fashioned methods of communication will still work, and postal mail is checked several times each week. This method is also the best way to get forms or other similar paperwork to the office for review.

***Note:** If sending important documents, please only send a copy! The U.S. Postal Service cannot 100 percent guarantee delivery to the office, so it is important that you not send your only copy!

To contact the office via postal mail, please use the following address:

Columbus Office

Hon. Kenny Yuko
State Representative, 7th District
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215



Special Events and Speaker Requests

All offices receive invitations to events in both Columbus and the district nearly every day of the week. Do you think your meeting attendees would like to discuss issues and legislative matters with one of their state elected officials? Send us an invitation!

Though all requests cannot be granted due to scheduling conflicts, lawmakers are able to attend many different events in their districts throughout the year.

When sending the invitation to your event or special gathering, please send all key information via any of the methods described on this page at least (2) weeks in advance. That way, there will be adequate time for the office to prepare for your event, and there will be a greater likelihood that there will not be another event conflicting with the time that your group meets.

New State Campaign Designed to “Save the Dream”

Goal: Help Stem Dangerous Tide of Foreclosures

The American dream of home ownership has turned nightmarish for far too many of our neighbors. The Mortgage Bankers Association found that in the fourth quarter of 2007, Ohio had 3.88 percent of all loans in foreclosures – tops in the nation. The situations in Ohio’s six biggest cities (Cleveland, Akron, Dayton, Toledo, Columbus and Cincinnati) serve as microcosms for the foreclosure crisis: RealtyTrac reports that all of them ranked in the top 33 nationally in the number of foreclosures in 2007.

This poisonous trend is devaluing communities, stressing our economy and depressing our residents. The Strickland administration is pursuing aggressive policies to make lenders part of the solution and give homeowners a fighting chance to stay in their homes.

Governor Strickland also created the *Ohio Foreclosure Prevention Task Force* to address the problem and recommend a course of action. The Task Force, which included State Representative Steve Driehaus (D-Cincinnati), focused its guidance on intervention, prevention and creating new options.

Some of those recommendations are encompassed in a new program through the Ohio Department of Commerce. “Save the Dream” is a foreclosure prevention public awareness campaign that uses a multimedia platform to deliver help and hope to homeowners desperate for both.

This program is designed to support the Task Force’s top recommendation: a public awareness campaign and borrower outreach events to bring struggling homeowners out of the shadows and encourage them to contact their mortgage provider at the first sign of danger. That communication is crucial if a homeowner has trouble making payments or faces a pricey reset in an adjustable rate mortgage.



“Save the Dream” has three major components:

- TV and radio ads to inform the public about the resources available to them
- A telephone hotline (**888-404-4674**) located at the Ohio Department of Development that can direct callers to assistance
- A website (www.savethedream.ohio.gov) rich with information about the foreclosure process and the action homeowners can take.

The hotline is staffed by professionals who ask callers a series of questions to determine the best course of assistance. If callers require legal help, the Ohio Attorney General’s office will forward them to participating agencies through a first-of-its-kind state program that provides pro bono attorneys to eligible homeowners and encourages mediation to resolve disputes.

The new website features easy links to local, state and federal resources, including HUD-approved counseling services. It gives a quick tutorial on the steps of the process, the language used and the timeline in which action must be taken. It also provides a checklist of topics to discuss in a call to a mortgage servicer in order to find amiable solutions to payment problems.

Protecting homeowners and saving their dreams must remain a top priority for the state. The longer this lingers, the more depressed home values, neighborhoods and residents will become. The goal of the “Save the Dream” campaign is to help homeowners keep the roofs over their heads, and I have confidence that it can.



SAVE THE
dream
OHIO'S FORECLOSURE
PREVENTION EFFORT

State Offers Help Managing Your Personal Finances

Website Offers Tips, Strategies to Make Money Planning Easier

Managing your personal finances can be stressful and confusing. Ohio Treasurer Richard Cordray has created an online resource to help you set and meet financial goals for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Your Money NOW is a new personal finance website that can be tailored to your specific needs.

For instance, too many children leave high school with no knowledge of real-world issues such as credit card debt and managing student loans.

This program provides easily accessible videos, simulations and games to teach students of all ages about complex money issues. There is also a "teachers' page" with a variety of resources from lesson planning to lists of possible guest lecturers.

On the other side of the spectrum, senior citizens and veterans are frequently victims of identity theft and other forms of consumer fraud. *Your Money NOW* devotes web pages to both groups with warning signs of unscrupulous activities and specific actions you can take to avoid scams.

Your Money NOW also regularly updates its small business page with useful articles on topics such as year-end tax planning tips, and how to sign onto the Agricultural Linked Deposit program to get lower interest on small business loans.

This resource is invaluable for every Ohioan. I encourage you to check out this new website at www.yourmoneynowonline.org to see how it can help you keep track of your hard-earned money.

STEM Awards Given to 21 Ohio Colleges & Universities

Grants Designed to Develop Talent for Ohio's Future

The Ohio Research Scholars program was born in our current biennial budget with two purposes: to lure world-class scholars to Ohio to help develop high-tech jobs for the future, and to provide for more expertise in the STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) for research and development.

The Ohio House of Representatives bolstered support for that program recently by passing House Bill 381, which re-appropriates money so that the program's funding totals \$150 million, three times the initial appropriation. It also permits private colleges and universities to apply for the programs, an important aspect of making this brand of education accessible and affordable for all.

This adds to more good news recently that 21 Ohio colleges and universities (listed to the right) will share \$22.7 million in "Choose Ohio First Scholarships" for grants to more than 2,000 Ohio resident STEM students. This demonstrates that Ohio is committed to sharing the wealth and making opportunity available for students in all corners of our state.

Proposals for a second round of awards are now being accepted. The deadline is May 7.

<u>Institution</u>	<u># Students</u>	<u>Amount</u>
University of Akron	366	\$5,044,700
Bowling Green State	18	\$235,000
Baldwin Wallace College	64	\$939,382
Cleveland State University	92	\$1,071,600
Case Western Reserve	154	\$1,894,100
Central State University	228	\$3,144,448
University of Cincinnati	245	\$3,529,000
Kent State University	72	\$846,000
Miami University	18	\$239,700
The Ohio State University	53	\$700,000
Ohio University	54	\$705,000
Shawnee State University	22	\$300,000
University of Toledo	32	\$370,800
Ursuline College	26	\$294,000
Wittenberg University	25	\$338,400
Wright State University	18	\$235,000
Youngstown State Univ.	72	\$270,000
Columbus State C.C.	7	\$25,500
Cuyahoga Comm. College	72	\$270,000
Lorain Co. Comm. College	234	\$835,006
Stark State College	218	\$808,912

Beware of Schemes Targeting Senior Citizens

Ohio House Passes Bill to Protect Against Insurance Schemes

Far too often, scam artists target senior citizens to seize the hard-earned money that seniors have saved for their "golden years." These scammers figure that seniors are easy, gullible targets if one gives them the right sales pitch.

Insurance schemes are especially prominent, playing off seniors' fears about their futures. The Ohio House of Representatives, led by freshman State Rep. Matthew Barrett (D-Amherst), recently acted to protect seniors from such schemes.

The Ohio House unanimously approved Amended Substitute House Bill 404, co-sponsored by Rep. Barrett and Rep. Jay Hottinger (R-Newark). This legislation protects seniors from predatory insurance deals known as Stranger Oriented Life Insurance schemes, or STOLI. STOLI schemes involve investors betting on when a senior citizen will die. An investment firm convinces a senior to take out a life insurance policy, often by promising a short period of "free insurance" by paying the premiums. In exchange, the senior turns the policy over to the salesperson's company after a two-year waiting period. When the insured person dies, the investor then receives the insurance money instead of the family of the deceased.

Avoiding Health Insurance Frauds

The FBI recognizes that, in addition to STOLI schemes, seniors are routinely targeted by health insurance frauds. The FBI has provided these tips to help senior citizens avoid falling into those traps:

- Never sign blank insurance claim forms.
- Never give blanket authorization to a medical provider to bill for services rendered.
- Ask medical providers about what they will charge and what you have to pay.
- Review your insurer's explanation of benefits and call with any questions.
- Do not do business with door-to-door or telephone salespeople who tell you that services or equipment are free.
- Only give your insurance/Medicare identification to those who have provided medical services to you.
- Keep accurate records of all health care appointments. Know if your physician ordered equipment for you.



I agree with Rep. Barrett's assessment that there was something inherently wrong about a process in which someone watches a death clock tick away the seconds toward their next big payday. We needed to shield some of our most vulnerable citizens from predatory vultures who profit from a senior citizen's death.

The passage of this bill also signified a landmark for my colleague from Amherst. This bill became the only legislation with a freshman Democrat as a primary sponsor to pass so far during the 127th General Assembly. That speaks to the hard work the sponsors performed on this legislation and the importance and urgency this good public policy carries.

House Bill 404 is now undergoing hearings in the Ohio Senate Insurance Committee. I hope the Senate sees the urgency of this bill as we did and moves it to Governor Strickland's desk quickly.

In the meantime, if you want to learn more about STOLI life settlements, the Ohio Department of Insurance suggests visiting one of these websites:

- www.nasd.com
- www.quatloos.com
- www.nasaa.org

You can also verify the licenses of agents, insurance companies, and life/viatical settlement providers and brokers through the Department of Insurance at (800) 686-1526 or online at www.ohioinsurance.gov.

Ohio Working to Attract New Business, Jobs

National Award, List of Successes Highlight Efforts to Move State Forward



The cornerstone at the Ohio Supreme Court building in downtown Columbus reads: "The Whole Fabric of Society Rests Upon Labor." It is a clear tribute to Ohio's dedicated workers and the need to use their talents to move the state forward. Jobs will drive Ohio's recovery from the national economic slowdown, and the state is making great progress in drawing high-quality opportunities for its citizens.

Ohio is working to evolve from a Rust Belt, manufacturing-heavy base to an agile marketplace of ideas and creativity from which companies can maximize their innovative potential with strong workers and a strong governmental partnership. Success stories are coming from all parts of the state and in a variety of sectors.

Recently, *Site Selection* magazine honored Ohio with its second consecutive Governor's Cup award. The 2007 Cup honored the 399 projects started in Ohio in the past year – the highest number of any state – that met specific criteria concerning construction or expansion of facilities, creation of new jobs or an investment in capital. This honor speaks to the direction Ohio is taking to draw in business and create the jobs that will sustain the state and make us a hub for innovation and technology in the 21st Century economy.

That award may have been a precursor to more good economic news. NetJets, a worldwide leader in private

jet aviation, recently announced that not only will it keep a significant presence in Columbus and retain 2,000 jobs, but it will also create more than 800 new jobs and more than double the size of FlightSafety International, thereby creating the largest flight training facility in the world. This announcement was a direct result of cooperation between NetJets, state and local officials.

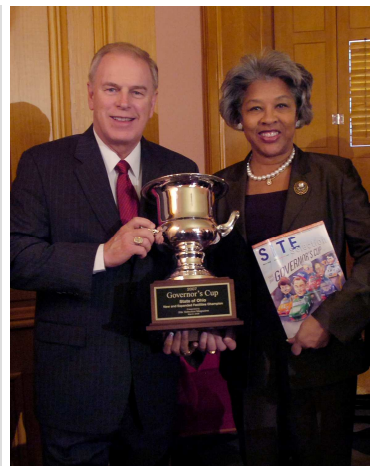
Deals with Goodyear in Akron, the Cleveland Clinic, Scioto County's Sun Coke Haverhill and Cardinal Health in suburban Columbus have dotted Ohio's economic landscape with positive outlooks and promises of prosperity in sectors of our state. The time is now ripe for a major investment in our workers and our communities to help everyone thrive.

Governor Strickland's *Building Ohio Jobs* stimulus plan is a \$1.57 billion package that targets investment in some of Ohio's greatest needs. From improving water and sewer systems to building new hubs for commerce and enhancing our Main Streets and neighborhoods, this proposal projects more than 57,000 new jobs in short order, and perhaps more through a commitment to internships and co-ops for college students. I believe it to be a very worthy investment in our future.

The current economic situation in our nation and its impact on our state may seem scary now. With strategic investment, however, Ohio can build upon the victories in its recent past to position itself as a national model of efficiency, innovation and success.

More examples of businesses expanding or moving to Ohio in the past year:

- Continental Airlines: Expanding hub in Cleveland (create 700+ jobs)
- GM: Investing \$335 million in Toledo Powertrain facility (retains 1,600 jobs)
- Sun Coke Haverhill: Expanding facility in Scioto County (retain 79 jobs, create 40)
- Cardinal Health: Building new 250,000 sq. ft. facility in Dublin (create 700 jobs, retain 1,194)
- Skybus Airlines: Started flying from Columbus hub in May (create 886 jobs, expected annual economic impact of at least \$1 billion)
- Goodyear: Agreed to stay in Akron for decades (retain 2,900 jobs)



Left: Governor Ted Strickland and Ohio House Democratic Leader Joyce Beatty hold the Governor's Cup Award from Site Selection. Right: The magazine cover honoring Ohio.