



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,

As autumn approaches and children head back to school, it is a good time to reflect on the major strides Ohio has taken toward improving education in our state. While other states have responded to the recession by slashing education funding, Ohio has protected school funding. We've done so because the key to lasting economic growth is to better prepare our children for the new kinds of jobs the 21st-Century economy is creating.

In order to put more Ohioans to work and promote lasting economic growth, we need to better prepare Ohio students for the new kinds of jobs our economy is creating. That's why in this session of the General Assembly we approved a new state education plan that ensures our schools are funded through a constitutional system, reforms our classrooms and strengthens the teachers to better prepare students for success.

Here are some of the most significant reforms:

- **Modernizing Ohio Classrooms** – Aligns Ohio's academic standards to international benchmarks and incorporates creativity and innovation into the classrooms, while strengthening the core subjects.
- **Expanding Learning Opportunities** – Provides more learning opportunities by establishing all-day kindergarten, gradually expanding the school year, and expanding the learning day with additional activities, community service and wellness programs.
- **Increasing School District Accountability and Transparency** – Establishes a new level of school district accountability and transparency to local taxpayers. The Department of Education will work with districts to ensure they're in compliance with standards and help them make necessary improvements.
- **Establishing a Constitutional Funding System and Reducing the Reliance on Local Taxpayers** – Uses research and best practices to determine the components for student success, then drives resources to districts based on those findings.

Our children are our future, and my colleagues and I in the Ohio House continue to work to ensure they get the best possible education.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me. I always welcome your thoughts, concerns and questions.

Sincerely,

Kenny Yuko
State Representative

September 2010

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A Speeding Ticket Should Come with Proof

House legislation would reverse Supreme Court's "Police Guestimate OK" ruling



A bill in the Ohio House would prohibit a person from being charged with speeding based only on a police officer's visual guess of a driver's speed.

Backers

believe it is unfair to law enforcement officers to place the burden of determining speed solely in their hands. There is also concern about a loss of civil rights.

The bill is in response to the large public outcry following a recent Ohio Supreme Court ruling that a peace officer's unaided visual estimate of a motor vehicle's speed was sufficient evidence for a speeding charge.

The Court held that an officer need only visually estimate the speed of a driver to convict someone of speeding as long as the officer is trained, certified, and experienced at estimating speeds by sight. The Supreme Court noted that a majority of lower courts had arrived at the same conclusion.

One justice dissented because he opposed creating a rule that says "the police officer is always right". The accused speeder, Mark Jenney, won his case at trial but will now have a speeding conviction on his record. The police officer had failed to bring the necessary radar equipment documentation to trial.

House Bill 552 would require peace officers to use "measurable proof" when making stops for speed infractions. This would include things like radar or electrical/ mechanical timing devices.

House Bill 552 is now pending in the Ohio House.

Land Banks Help Communities Deal with Foreclosure

House leads the way in expanding this valuable tool in more Ohio counties

Local governments are beginning to use a successful and powerful tool to address the foreclosure problem. The Ohio House and Senate approved bipartisan legislation to allow more areas to set up County Land Reutilization Corporations, known as Land Banks. The Governor signed the bill, and it recently took effect. Already, it is helping communities.

The law that began as House Bill 313 promotes the economic development and revitalization of Ohio communities. Land banks are a tool used by cities and counties to combat the negative impacts of vacant or abandoned properties in neighborhoods. Those empty homes can create health and safety concerns, a decrease in surrounding property values, and hurt economic development in the area.

A land bank provides a way to acquire those vacant properties, rather than let them sit empty and abandoned. Then the home can be salvaged or demolished. If the property is demolished, the land

can be reclaimed for future redevelopment.

As the economy and housing market improves, that property can be sold to new owners for new uses. The money from that sale can go to pay delinquent taxes and allow the land bank to recoup its investment.

The legislature originally allowed only Cuyahoga County to set up a land bank as a pilot program. But their experience has been so successful that the Ohio House initiated the effort to expand the reach of the idea. Cuyahoga County is on track to acquire 700 properties by the end of the year that would otherwise have been nothing but a burden on the community.

While Ohioans need more help dealing with the foreclosure crisis, land banks have proven to be a successful tool in protecting our communities from the negative impacts of the problem.

Bringing Green Jobs and Green Energy to Ohio

The Ohio House is fighting to create jobs and position Ohio to lead tomorrow's economy

Here in Ohio, we are looking forward. We are looking past the national recession and positioning our state to not only recover but thrive by bringing jobs and businesses back within our borders.

Over the past year, the Ohio House passed initiatives to foster jobs, grow Ohio's small businesses and encourage investment in new and emerging industries across the state. Now, state Representatives are focusing their efforts on a powerful new tool that will attract the burgeoning wind and solar energy industry to Ohio while ensuring we create Ohio jobs.

Upon qualifying for the exemption, the facility must also make payments to local school districts and governments in lieu of taxes. These payments, which are based on the number of Ohio residents the project employs and the output of the facility, will ensure a steady stream of revenue for local school districts and governments and make Ohio competitive with states across the nation in bringing advanced energy facilities and jobs to our state.

Not only does the legislation bring green jobs here today, it ensures that we can sustain industry growth



The House has passed a green jobs bill that incentivizes companies to build their facilities in Ohio. The bill eliminates the tangible personal property tax for companies that commit to building their facilities on Ohio soil and employing our men and women. To qualify, projects must also promise to begin construction by or before January 1, 2012 and be up and running by the end of 2012.

A project's eligibility is dependent in part on employing Ohio workers. All projects, whether wind or solar, are required to use Ohio workers to make up at least 50 percent of their labor force.

down the road. Provisions in the bill support the education and training of tomorrow's renewable energy workforce. Large-scale wind and solar facilities who benefit from the tax exemption are required to partner with an Ohio college or university to give those enrolled in those institutions the resources they need to secure a successful future in the renewable energy industry.

The legislation will position Ohio to lead the economy of tomorrow while helping us meet our alternative energy portfolio goals set forth in legislation passed during the previous General Assembly. We are truly building a brighter and more prosperous future through innovation.

All projects, whether wind or solar, are required to use Ohio workers to make up at least 50 percent of their labor force.

Ohio House Fights to Restore Fiscal Responsibility

Lawmakers committed to improving government efficiency, maintaining competitive tax structure

The national economic downturn has been difficult on families, businesses and state budgets all across the country. Here in Ohio, we have made difficult decisions to restore fiscal responsibility in state government.

We have balanced our priorities like education and job creation with the need to reduce government spending and keep taxes low. We passed a state budget that cut spending for the first time in nearly 50 years. From 1992 to 2006 the state budget increased by an average of 9.7 percent. Over the last two budgets, state government has demonstrated unprecedented restraint and this past year the budget shrunk by 3.7 percent, marking the first time in a half century that state budget was reduced.

We understand that even as recovery takes hold and we begin to rebuild from the national recession, we must remain focused on living within our means. That's why House Democrats passed legislation to reduce over 100 state boards and commissions and eliminate funding for a legislative review commission known as the Workers' Compensation Council. Taken together, these measures will improve government efficiency and generate over \$1 million in savings for Ohio's employers.

To address the budget challenges ahead we must continue to resize government, as well as create jobs that will grow our economy and strengthen Ohio's tax base. Currently, the size of Ohio's workforce is at a 20-year low with 5,000 fewer state employees. House Democrats



also introduced legislation to cut pay for state lawmakers by 5 percent. Efficient and affordable government will go a long way in fostering sustainable government as Ohio moves forward.

Maintaining a competitive tax structure is another key component of growing our economy and restoring financial stability. Ohio is now the 15th lowest in state taxes

per capita, according to the Federation of Tax Administrators. We are now just one of two states that doesn't tax business personal property or corporation profits. Among Midwestern states, Ohio has the best public policy climate for small businesses and entrepreneurs, according to the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council's "Small Business Survival Index 2009." We're already well-positioned to attract and keep businesses in our state and we remain committed to retaining our business-friendly tax climate to realize growth as companies start the process of expanding.



We've also kept taxes down for our families. While other states responded to the national economic downturn by raising taxes, we were able to balance our budget while Keeping Ohio's taxes low and competitive. We kept our commitment to tax reform and as a result, Ohioans have seen a 17 percent reduction in their state income taxes over the last four years.



There will be much to do in the coming months to keep Ohio on the path toward growth and prosperity but our state and its leaders are up to the challenge. The steps we've taken have laid a strong foundation for Ohio's recovery and we will continue to fight for our families and businesses as we build a stronger, more sustainable tomorrow.

Legislative Survey

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY YUKO
SEPTEMBER 2010

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 support cutting the cost of higher education by requiring college textbook publishers to offer electronic versions, or "e-books"?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

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

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

3. Do you support statewide efforts to update the passenger rail transportation system throughout Ohio?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

4. Do you support limits on marketing by credit card companies on university and college campuses?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

5. Do you support enhanced regulation of the towing industry in Ohio to prevent "rogue towers" from gouging consumers?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

6. Would you support eliminating the state income tax if it means cuts to vital public services such as police and fire protection and libraries?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

7. Would you like to see an increase in the use of solar panels, wind turbines and other renewable energy systems at schools and other government buildings?

- 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!**

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(PLEASE FILL IN YOUR ADDRESS)

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HERE
POST OFFICE
WILL NOT
DELIVER
WITHOUT
PROPER
POSTAGE

Hon. Kenny Yuko
State Representative, 7th District
Ohio House of Representatives
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