



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,

You sent me to the Statehouse to represent you, and that is an assignment I take very seriously. There is a phrase we use in these halls, "The People's Business," that reflects our responsibility to act on your behalf when it comes to matters of state government.

But it is still "your business." You haven't, nor should you, give me free reign to do whatever I want. I still answer to you, the constituents. That is why it is so important that you be able to know what is going on with your state government. Your government has a responsibility to conduct business out in the open, and not cloaked in secrecy. That is the only way you can know how your tax dollars being spent, and whether those dollars are going to programs that work or not.

Words like transparency and accountability are not just slogans or ideas that are trotted out when we want to sound like we support good government. Transparency and accountability are the foundations of our democratic system, and are what separates our system from that of dictatorships of the world.

Transparency gives you the right to know what your government is doing with your money. Accountability gives you the right to say no when you don't like what your government is doing.

Officials should not be allowed to just say, "trust me," and keep you in the dark. As Thomas Jefferson said, "Information is the currency of democracy."

It is often difficult to maintain sunshine and openness in government. Entrenched interests often prefer to operate in the shadows and avoid scrutiny for their actions. But I vow to continue representing your interests, and to maintain your right to know what your government is doing.

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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March 2011



Bonus Available for Veterans of Recent Wars

Those who served during the Iraq, Afghanistan and Persian Gulf Conflicts eligible

In November 2009, voters overwhelmingly approved the Ohio Veterans Bonus. Veterans who served during the Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf conflicts may be eligible to receive a bonus from the state of Ohio.



To be eligible for the bonus, veterans must have served in the U.S. armed forces on active duty anywhere in the world, for purposes other than training, between August 2, 1990 and March 3, 1991 or any time since October 7, 2001.

It's easy to apply. Veterans can simply visit www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov or call 1-877-OHIO-VET. They will need their Department of Defense form 214 or other proof of honorable, active duty service, plus documents such as an Ohio driver license or tax returns that prove they are an Ohio resident now and were an Ohio resident at the start of their active duty service.

Eligible veterans may receive \$100 for each month spent on active duty service in the following locations or theaters during these dates: Persian Gulf between August 2, 1990 and March 3, 1991; Afghanistan since October 7, 2001; or Iraq since March 19, 2003. The maximum benefit for in-theater service is \$1,000.

Eligible veterans serving on active duty (except active duty for training only) anywhere else during the above specified dates may receive \$50 a month up to a total benefit of \$500.

Veterans may receive a combined, maximum benefit of \$1,500 for theater and non-theater service during the specified dates.

Eligible veterans who are medically discharged or medically retired from service due to combat-related disabilities sustained during Persian Gulf, Afghanistan or Iraq service are entitled to \$1,000. These veterans may also receive \$50 a month for their non-theater service up to a total of \$500.

Families of deceased veterans may be eligible for \$5,000 if the veteran lost his or her life as a result of injuries or illness sustained in Persian Gulf, Afghanistan or Iraq service. These families may also receive the bonus the veteran had earned per month, up to a maximum total benefit of \$6,500.

Families of veterans whose death was not a result of injuries or illness sustained in Persian Gulf, Afghanistan or Iraq service may receive the bonus the veterans had earned per month, up to a total maximum benefit of \$1,500.

Eligible veterans or families of eligible veterans who were classified by the Department of Defense as a prisoner of war or missing in action may receive a bonus payment of \$5,000.

Apply for your Ohio Veterans Bonus

www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov

- **Complete the on-line application form**

(The application will take approximately 20 minutes. You will need your DD-214 and/or other documentation showing your service dates. If you leave the website before your application is completed, it will not be saved.)

- **If you have questions or need help, call 1-877-OHIO-VET**

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 an 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

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

State Services and Resources for Tax Filing Season

A List of Quick, Convenient Refund Options

No one likes to wait on payday, so why wait on your tax return this year?

The state offers a number of electronic filing options to ensure you get your money as quickly and easily as possible.

Filing taxes electronically gets you to the front of the line, and if you're due a refund, the state will deposit it directly into your bank account within seven days.



Online payment options are also available. During tax season, the state receives, on average, 100,000 income tax returns each day. A return that gets caught in the rush can take weeks to process, and even longer before it makes its way back to your pocket.

Taking advantage of online services is faster and easier for you, and also saves the government a buck or two per return. When the state saves money, you save too.

Choose from the Convenient Tax Filing Options Listed Below:

This online tax service reduces complicated tax forms to a series of simple questions that are used to determine for which deductions and tax credits you qualify. These results can be filed using the Efile option (description below).



The I-File wizard asks you a series of questions, then compiles a state or school district income tax return for you based on your answers. I-File will even do the math for you. And it's free. If you owe taxes, there's also an ePayment option that allows you to pay by either electronic check or credit card.

Another option for electronic filing is eForms. You can complete Adobe Acrobat versions of all our major state and school district income tax forms online, much as you would on paper. eForms will even do most of your math for you. And it's free.



If you file through a tax preparer, or if you use software on your home computer to prepare a return, you may be able to file your state and federal tax returns electronically through the IRS e-file program. Taxpayers with lower or moderate incomes may also be eligible for the IRS "free file" options.

If you owe, you have the option of paying your taxes online by credit card or electronic check through ePayment. It's secure, flexible and it even allows you to post-date an electronic check so that it doesn't come out of your bank account until the day taxes are due.



Filing Season Central

Filing Season Central can be accessed through the Ohio Department of taxation web site (www.tax.ohio.gov).

The site covers numerous tax-related topics and provides printable versions of 2010 tax forms and instruction booklets.



Contact the Ohio Department of Taxation

Individual Taxpayer Assistance:
(800) 282-1780
Business Taxpayer Assistance:
(800) 405-4039
Income Tax Refund Hotline
(800) 282-1784

Or log onto their website:
<http://Tax.Ohio.gov>

Legislative Survey

REPRESENTATIVE KENNY YUKO
MARCH 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:

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

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

3. Should Ohio abandon plans for a job-creating statewide passenger rail transportation system before studies on it are completed?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

4. Do you support state efforts against unscrupulous mortgage servicers who take advantage of Ohio homeowners?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

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

- 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. 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 _____



TAPE HERE

**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
State Representative, 7th District
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

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