



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,

The national economic downturn has been difficult on families, businesses and state budgets all across the country. In Ohio, we have made difficult decisions to restore fiscal responsibility. We have also balanced our priorities like education and job creation with the need to reduce government spending and keep taxes low.

While other states have responded to the national recession by raising taxes, in Ohio we have balanced our budget while keeping Ohio's taxes low and competitive. We have kept our commitment to tax reform. As a result, Ohioans have seen a 17 percent reduction in their state income taxes over the last four years. For a family of four that earns \$60,000 this will save them about \$350 a year.

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 do not 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."

Over the last three years, Ohio has significantly cut state spending and reduced the size of government. The state has 5,000 fewer employees over that time, and the size of Ohio's government workforce is now at a 20-year low.

State spending has also been dramatically reduced. In fiscal years 2008 and 2009, state spending was reduced by \$1.5 billion, with an additional reduction of \$1.9 billion for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. This \$3.4 billion in cuts was the largest 4-year spending reduction in over a generation. In fact, the current two-year budget marked the first time in over 40 years that the spending decreased (-3.7 percent) compared to 40 years of average budget increases of 17.3 percent.

As you tighten your belts at home and work, know that we are doing the same with your state government.

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

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

October 2010

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 improve, 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.

State Help Available For Decisions on Long Term Care

State Ombudsman can help with selections and information on your rights

Ohioans should expect excellence and choices in long-term care.

If you're like most Ohioans, at some point, you or a family member will need long-term care. In fact, seven out of 10 people over the age of 65 will require some long-term care services.

The good news is that long-term care is changing for the better and Ohio's state long-term care ombudsman is part of this positive movement. The state's long-term care ombudsman serves as the voice of Ohio consumers and advocates for quality care for individuals receiving home care, assisted living and nursing home care.

Ombudsmen are advocates who provide a voice to the needs and preferences of clients. Ombudsmen link residents with services or agencies, offer advice on selecting long-term care providers, inform consumers about their rights and provide information and assistance with benefits and insurance.

Ombudsmen do not "police" nursing homes and home health agencies. Instead, they work with providers, residents, their families and other representatives to resolve problems and concerns.

If you are in need of long-term care services, the state ombudsman suggests that you search for providers that advertise the types of services you are looking for. Ohio providers offer a large range of services from home-first programs to community living options.



There are many different approaches to care in the nursing home world – person-centered care, Eden, Green House, Small House. Lingo aside, what we're really talking about is creating a home full of choices wherever a consumer wants to live.

To find a provider that creates such an environment, expect excellence. Residents should be able to spend their day as they would have before they moved, by participating in activities such as gardening, reading, cooking or even bird watching.

Look for a provider that gives consumers meal choices and consistent assignment of staff. This allows staff to get to know the resident's likes and dislikes as well as form friendships. The provider should also engage those caretakers and the resident in care planning. The last thing you want when you visit a provider is to feel like you are visiting an institution.

Both the private sector and government organizations have joined together to help providers change the way they serve you by providing resources and education for nursing homes.

Many person-centered practices don't cost more; in fact, there is a business case for culture change, whether by making the home more attractive and increasing occupancy and revenue or by making operations more efficient and reducing staff turnover.

Who can call the Ombudsman Program?

Anyone may call the Ombudsman. There is no requirement to speak with another agency or the provider first.

How does the Ombudsman Program work for you?

The Ombudsman handles complaints about long-term care services and serves as a liaison voicing the needs and concerns of the consumer to providers of long-term care.

What should I do if I have a complaint?

First, you may wish to address your concern to the provider. If you are unable to solve the problem yourself, your regional ombudsman can help. Your call will be confidential, and they will not act without consulting you and involving you in the resolution process.

For more information:

Call **1-800-282-1206**

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
OCTOBER 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 _____



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

FOLD UNDER