

# TRACY RICHARDSON

STATE REPRESENTATIVE



## DEAR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS,

It is a new year at the Ohio Statehouse, and spring is just around the corner. Following a brief break to celebrate the holiday season and spend time with family, the Ohio House of Representatives resumed meeting the 2nd week of January.

2023 was a busy year in the Ohio House of Representatives and I anticipate the same for 2024. This newsletter highlights some recent events and updates you on my current work.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and ideas as we move forward together. Please reach out to my office by email at [Rep86@OhioHouse.gov](mailto:Rep86@OhioHouse.gov), or by phone at (614)-466-8147 if I can help in any way.

# VETO OVERRIDE

## HOUSE BILL 68

Protecting children and ensuring fair competition for women are two of my top priorities. Following the Governor's veto of House Bill 68, also known as the SAFE Act and Save Women's Sports Act, **I knew that we must override his decision.**

House Bill 68 will protect children who are experiencing gender dysphoria from sex change procedures including chemical castration through puberty blockers, and invasive surgical procedures. It also includes the Save Women's Sports Act, which ensures women are able to compete without the threat of a competitor who has an unfair physical advantage.

**I unhesitatingly voted in favor of the veto override and am proud to report that my colleagues in the Ohio Senate did the same.**

## CAPITAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

After working closely with community leaders in both Union and Marion Counties for the past several months, **I am pleased to announce that the first phase of the Capital Budget process in the Ohio House of Representatives is complete.** The Ohio House of Representatives recently voted out House Bill 2, the Strategic Community Investment Fund. This funding was established in the state's main operating budget passed in 2023 and includes excess funding from the previous fiscal year.

**The following projects in the 86th House District and surrounding region, if passed by the Ohio Senate, will receive funding:**

- \$12.5 million to the Transportation Research Center for upgrades to their Impact Lab, helping secure TRC as the proving ground for automotive innovation;
- \$1.6 million for classroom and building renovations at Marion Technical College to meet the growing demands for a qualified workforce;
- \$450,000 to renovate the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Chapel in Marion, so that it may open to the public again;
- \$300,000 to restore the George W. King Mansion in Marion. The mansion is located on the National Register of Historic Places and provides an attraction to the city;
- \$218,000 to establish six new pickleball courts in the Village of Richwood;





# CAPITAL BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS CONT.

- \$185,000 to continue the restoration of the Women's History Resource Center at the Marion County Federation of Women's Club;
- \$162,545 to create a walking trail around the Lee Manville Memorial Park Baseball Field Complex and build a new playground at the park;
- \$49,849 to establish an ADA friendly walking path around the Richwood Independent Fairgrounds;
- \$4.6 million to improve Ohio's Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs so they can continue to provide academic recovery services, support mental health wellbeing programs, and continue investing in skilled and robust workforce centers that will strengthen our state and its economy.

The next phase of funding for community projects will come from the traditional State Capital Budget. **I look forward to beginning Phase 2 of this process and securing more support for our district!**



# FIGHTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

On January 23rd, I reintroduced the **Expanding Human Trafficking Justice Act (House Bill 385)** with a group of advocates from across our state. **This legislation will open doors for survivors of human trafficking by expanding the pathway to expungement of their criminal records for crimes they committed as a result of being trafficked.** Carrying a criminal record can be a major roadblock to gainful employment, stable housing, and educational

opportunities, all of which are crucial when a survivor is trying to exit their situation. Providing an expanded pathway to expungement for victims and survivors provides these individuals with a path forward. **I have also co-sponsored House Bill (H.B.) 377, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act and H.B. 230, the Saving Ohio Communities Act.** These two pieces of legislation focus on increasing the penalties for drug and human trafficking offenses.

# PROPERTY TAXES

Rising property taxes are an issue across the state, and as appraisals go up, so do my concerns. During this General Assembly, I am working with my colleagues to find a meaningful solution to keeping vulnerable Ohioans in their homes. To help reform our current law, I am one of five State Representatives who have been **appointed to the Joint Committee on Property Tax Review and Reform**. My goal on the committee will be to voice the concerns I've heard and to thoroughly consider all possible solutions. The joint committee has heard testimony from organizations such as the Ohio Farm Bureau, the National Federation of Independent Business, the County Commissioners Association, and the Department of Taxation. Each of these hearings are open to the public and are livestreamed on the [Ohio Channel](#).



## MY LEGISLATION

- **House Bill 103, The Americanism Act** – This bill provides a means to review Ohio's K-12 social studies standards. As directed by H.B. 103, a nine member task force will use "American Birthright: The Civics Alliance's Model K-12 Social Studies Standards," as a guide to review our standards. The goal is to ensure that Ohio's social studies standards are clear and will teach our children essential fundamentals of Americanism, like the U.S. and Ohio Constitutions.
- **House Bill 250, Revise the Military Enlistment Diploma Seal** – I recently provided sponsor testimony for H.B. 250 in the Senate Education Committee. This legislation is truly straightforward. It expands eligibility for the Military Enlistment Seal to ensure that every high school graduate who is willing to serve our nation can receive this honor on their diploma. This is an important bill that corrects an oversight and ensures parity for the graduates entering United States Military Service Academies. All university or college ROTC applicants accepted into those programs will also be eligible.
- **House Bill 254, Expanded and Enhanced Homestead Exemption for Disabled Veterans** – As property values continue to rise across the state, it is crucial that we act now to protect veterans. H.B. 254 provides an 100% property tax exemption to veterans with 100% disability ratings. Additionally, this legislation seeks to expand eligibility for an exemption to veterans with disability ratings of 50% or greater. The legislation has had 3 hearings in the House Ways and Means Committee.
- **House Bill 385, The Expanding Human Trafficking Justice Act** – This legislation will open doors for survivors of human trafficking by expanding the pathway to expungement of their criminal records. H.B. 385 seeks to expand the offenses eligible for record expungement to include felonies of the fourth- and fifth-degrees and misdemeanors. A criminal record can be a major roadblock to gainful employment, stable housing, and educational opportunities, all of which are crucial when a survivor is trying to exit the scourge of human trafficking.



# PROUDLY SERVING YOU



As I continue my work in the state legislature, please don't hesitate to contact my office if you need assistance with a state issue or would like to share your thoughts with me. I also encourage you to follow my social media for updates on what's happening in Columbus and our community.



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