

A legislative update from  
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Dear Neighbor,

Happy Holidays! As we enter into the holiday season, I want to provide one last update before the new year. I am proud of the work Ohioans have done together here at the Statehouse this year. We have fought back against anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, advocated for property tax relief, and defended democracy twice!

Looking ahead to the new year, I am optimistic for the future of our state. We will continue to push forward in protecting democracy as we advocate for redistricting reform and work to ensure our new constitutional right to abortion is accessible for all.

As I close out my first year as a state representative, I want to thank you all for your continued support and for making your voices heard. I am proud to represent District 11! My office is ready and willing to help with any issues or bill ideas you may have.

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season,

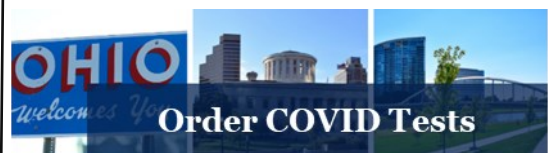
*Anita Somani*

**Anita Somani, M.D.**  
 State Representative  
 Ohio House District 11

The HEAP Winter Crisis Program helps eligible, low-income Ohioans pay their heating bills with a one-time payment for most utility companies.

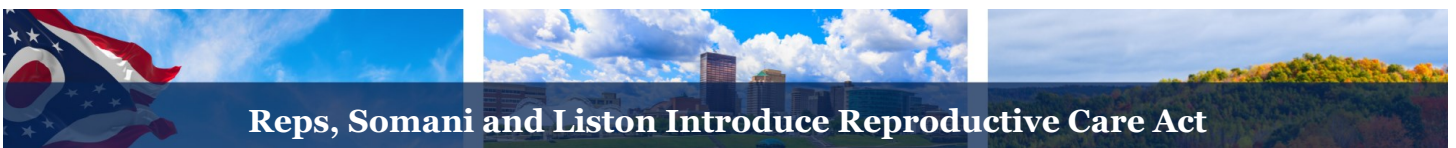
Applications must be received by **May 31, 2024**. To see if you are eligible and to apply for HEAP online, click [here](#).

Please reach out to our office if you need assistance with your applications or want to check on the status.



Make sure you get your updated COVID and flu shots this holiday season! Visit [www.vaccines.gov/](http://www.vaccines.gov/) to find a COVID or flu shot provider near you.

The federal government has also expanded free at-home COVID tests. Click [here](#) to order your four free tests per household.

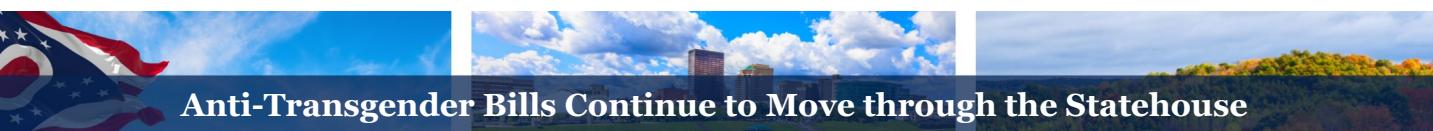
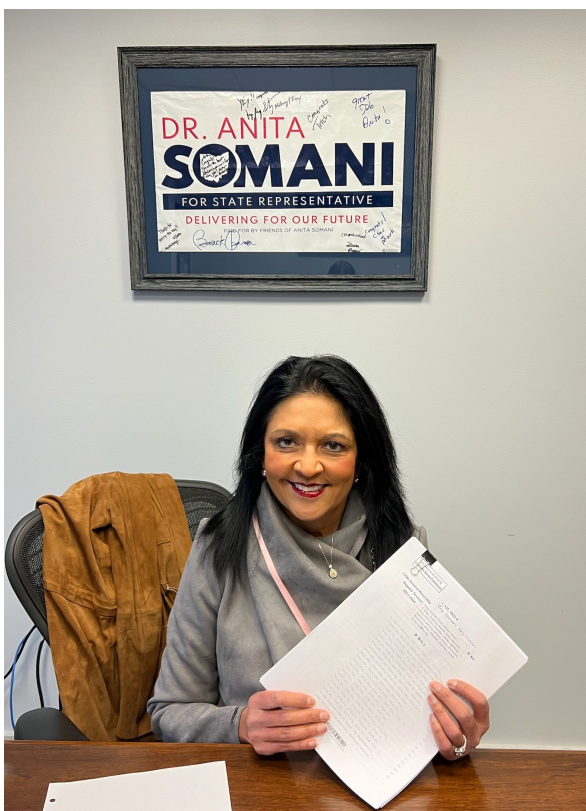


Last month, Representative Beth Liston and I introduced [HB 343, The Reproductive Care Act](#). This legislation will reduce barriers to accessing abortion reproductive healthcare. With the passage of Issue 1, we have made abortion access a constitutional right. However, there is much that still needs to be done to remove barriers to care and improve access.

The Reproductive Care Act will repeal existing statutes related to abortion care, such as mandatory 24-hour waiting periods, transfer agreements, and TRAP laws. It will also add protections related to patients and providers including data privacy, nondiscrimination, along with civil and criminal protections for evidence-based care.

Rep. Liston and I [held a press conference](#) to announce the Reproductive Care Act, and we were grateful to have some abortion advocates and physicians standing beside us.

I am proud to sponsor this crucial piece of legislation and look forward to continuing to fight for expanding access and repealing extreme legislation that the Ohio GOP has passed over the last decade.



There are [multiple bills](#) moving through the House or Senate that will limit the rights and freedoms of trans youth and adults. These pieces are moving just as six cities in Ohio (Akron, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, and Dublin) [received a perfect score for equality and “stepping up” to combat anti-LGBTQ+ bills](#), according to the Human Rights Campaign.

Here are some major bills to watch for and what they will do:

**House Bill 8, The “Parents Bill of Rights”:** Requires public schools to notify parents regarding a student’s health and well-being, as well as notification for materials with sexuality content. *This bill passed the House and is now in the Senate Education Committee*

**House Bill 68, The “Safe Act”:** Bans gender affirming care for minors and requires schools to create single-sex sports teams. This will prevent children from receiving the necessary healthcare they need and will prevent transgender women and girls from competing in K-12 **and** collegiate sports. *This bill passed the House and is now in the Senate Government Oversight Committee*

**House Bill 245:** Bans drag performances (“adult cabaret performances”) from public spaces where children are. This would include parks, libraries, and parades. *The bill is in the House Criminal Justice Committee.*

**House Bill 183:** Bans transgender students from using public restrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity. *The bill is in the House Higher Education Committee.*

Most of these bills have already been introduced in other states and [have been struck down by the courts](#). Moving them through the legislative process only for them to get tied up in the courts is a waste of our taxpayer dollars. We must work on passing legislation that actually helps Ohioans, rather than isolate communities and strip them of their rights.

If you are frustrated by these pieces of legislation, please reach out to the conservative members of these committees (found [here](#)) or Speaker Stephens at [rep93@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:rep93@ohiohouse.gov) to urge him not to bring these bills to the floor.