

# State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan

Ohio House District 14

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Dear District 14 Resident:

Last month I shared how proud I was to cast my vote for House Bill 23 (HB 23) - the state's \$12.5 billion two-year transportation budget - *the largest jobs investment in state history*. I was especially proud of the bipartisan nature of this bill's passage. In fact, it was passed by a vote of 74-21 with 43 Republicans joining all 31 Democrats (the other 21 Republicans voted "nay"). The passage of this very important bill proves that **when Democrats and Republicans work across the aisle Ohioans benefit!**

At that point, the bill was on its way to the Ohio Senate. I am very happy to tell you that HB 23 subsequently passed the Senate on a bipartisan basis, as well. However, because the Senate made some changes to the bill, it had to come back to the House for final agreement. I am pleased to report that Democrats and Republicans joined again and voted to agree to the Senate changes, then the bill was sent to Governor DeWine who quickly signed it into law.

Here is my statement after voting to approve HB 23: "As I pressed my green 'YES' button to vote on behalf of my 126,000 constituents in Parma, Parma Heights, and West Park, to approve the state of Ohio's biggest job creation bill in history, I nearly lost my breath. To think that this product of a single mother on public assistance would one day vote on a \$13.5 billion bill that would positively impact the lives of all of Ohio's 12-million residents, proves that the American Dream is alive. This vote also proves my mantra that Democrats and Republicans can work together and when they do all Ohioans benefit. What an honor it is to serve the public today!"

HB 23 prioritizes job creation, public transportation funding, the allocation of roughly \$6 billion over the next two years to statewide highway construction projects, and improved railway safety measures. To read about the details of HB 23, as well as other bills I am supporting, how to sign up for my monthly newsletter, to read my press releases, and more visit [ohiohouse.gov/members/sean-p-brennan](https://ohiohouse.gov/members/sean-p-brennan).

In closing, as Memorial Day approaches, please join me in prayer for those who gave all that we might be free.

Sincerely,

**Sean Patrick Brennan**

State Representative, District 14

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Recently, I had the honor of playing House versus Senate Family Feud at a charity event in Columbus. Here I am competing against my friend - our Senator Nickie Antonio.





## State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan Plain Dealer 3/19/23

# The view from inside the Statehouse finds bipartisanship isn't dead yet

Sean Patrick Brennan

“Bipartisanship is dead.”

That is an easy assumption to make, with plenty of evidence these days in our states' and nation's capitals. However, my experience thus far as a newly elected Democratic member of the Ohio House of Representatives gives me hope that reaching across the aisle is still possible. Our first three major votes over the past two months inform my position.

First, in January, 22 Republicans joined all 32 Democrats to elect Jason Stephens as our Speaker of the House in a contested race, with 43 Republicans voting for the other Republican candidate.

Later in January, in a similar vote, we approved our rules of procedure, allowing us to begin our work.

Even more encouraging, on March 1, the Ohio House passed House Bill 23. HB 23 is the \$12.6 billion, two-year transportation budget. This is the largest transportation budget in state history. It passed 74-21 with 43 Republicans and 31 Democrats voting yea and 21 Republican nay votes. The bill is now pending in the Ohio Senate.

HB 23 is the quintessential bipartisan bill and proves that, when members of both parties work together, Ohioans benefit. It includes billions for job-creating bridge and highway construction, funding for public transit, measures to improve rail safety, cuts to fees for plug-in hybrid vehicles and allowances for Amtrak expansion, and it permits Ohioans to travel to neighboring countries with a “Real ID” driver's license or ID card rather than a passport, among many other provisions.

In an interesting turn of events, the bipartisan HB 23 represents a 25% increase in spending over the current transportation budget due, in large part, to funding from the bipartisan infrastructure bill passed by Congress in late 2022.

Now don't get me wrong, I am not naive. There are many bills currently pending that will, no doubt, lead to many bitter confrontations, and I may eat my words. However, if my colleagues and I remain willing to seek common ground, Ohioans will see how the fruits of our labor work for them, and even our most partisan members and constituents may begin to see the wisdom of the members of both parties working together and get on board the bipartisan bandwagon.

I am of the opinion that the root of the partisan divide in our states and nation is hyper-gerrymandering. It has caused candidates of both parties to meander toward the extremes and has taken away the incentive to work together, lest one be labeled a RINO (Republican In



One encouraging sign of bipartisanship in state government is the Ohio House's passage of the \$12.6 billion, two-year transportation budget with votes from 43 Republicans and 31 Democrats. *The Plain Dealer*

Name Only) or DINO (Democrat In Name Only).

I applaud the words of former Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, who has indicated that she may be leading a ballot initiative to create a truly non-partisan redistricting commission. Recent comments by Gov. Mike DeWine indicating that allowing politicians to draw political maps is not a good idea are also encouraging. To ensure the momentum we are seeing in the Ohio House, placing this issue on the ballot should be the No. 1 aim of everyone who wants state government to work for all Ohioans.

Some may say it is too early to come to my conclusion, or that I am an idealistic newbie. However, as a social studies teacher for three decades, I know that we have been here before, and I know that we can return to normalcy again. After all, according to our state motto, borrowed from Matthew 19:26, “With God, all things are possible.”

*Brennan is the state representative for Ohio's 14th Ohio House District, which includes Parma, Parma Heights and part of Cleveland's West Park neighborhood. Before serving as a state representative, he was a public educator in the Brecksville-Broadview Heights Schools for nearly three decades and served on Parma City Council for nearly two decades.*



## Brennan Sets In-District “Office Hours”

As a public servant I want to be accessible to my constituents. Knowing what is on people's minds helps me represent them better at the Statehouse. I hope folks will join me for my open office hours. There is no RSVP required. Please contact my office at 614-466-3485 or [Rep14@OhioHouse.gov](mailto:Rep14@OhioHouse.gov), if you would prefer a private meeting or if you require immediate assistance with a state issue.

**Monday, May 22 (11:30 am – 1:00 pm) - Parma Heights Library - 6206 Pearl Road – room A**

**Monday, May 15 (6:00 pm – 7:30 pm) - P.J. McIntyre's Irish Pub - 17119 Lorain Avenue, Cleveland**

**Friday, May 19 (8:00 am – 9:30 am) - Starbucks - 6780 Ridge Road, Parma**



## District Spotlight

Hats off to Parma Heights Mayor Marie Gallo for keeping her promise to make the multi-million dollar Nathan Hale Park retention basin project a reality. The project will go a long way in addressing flooding issues in the community. I was honored to join her, as well as Parma Mayor Timothy DeGeeter, County Councilman Scott Tuma, and others important to the project for the official ground breaking recently.



## Statehouse Spotlight

Most of us know someone afflicted with Alzheimer's Disease or some other form of dementia. One of my priorities at the Statehouse is to work with leaders in the healthcare industry to support seeking cures to diseases like these, as well as making health care more accessible and affordable. I was honored recently to meet with, talk to, and learn from leaders from the north-east Ohio Alzheimer's Association.



## Unsung Hero Spotlight

Anyone who has ever visited the Donna Smallwood Activities Center - A.K.A. The Parma Senior Center - knows how wonderful Director Erin Lally and her staff are to their many visitors. I was raised in large part by my grandparents. In fact, I lived with my Grandma Brennan from 7th grade through college. As a result, I have always had a special place in my heart for senior citizens. The staff at the Senior Center share my love for our seniors and for that I say, "Thank you and keep up the great work!"

