

State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan

Ohio House District 14

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February 2024

***Proudly serving Parma, Parma Heights,
and Cleveland's West Park Neighborhood!***

Dear District 14 Resident:

I have always considered myself a consumer watchdog. From my nearly twenty years on Parma City Council and, now, as your state representative, I am constantly on the lookout to protect consumers. My focus on consumer costs, no doubt, dates back to the days of my childhood. Our family of four lived a normal middle-class lifestyle until my dad abandoned us. My mom lost the house and we would have been homeless if it weren't for family members that helped out. My mom hesitantly applied for food stamps and other public assistance until she *sort of* got back on her feet because dad never paid a dime of child support and her take home pay was very low.

We eventually moved into a trailer park and life remained financially pretty bad. I recall with sadness mom taking us a couple of towns over to buy groceries because back then food stamps were coupons you tore out of a booklet, so everyone in line knew you were on welfare. It hurt my heart when I heard people murmur things like “white trash” and questioning what mom had in the cart. I also recall how even little costs, like postage stamps and gasoline for the lawn mower, were difficult, let alone buying food, paying the gas and electric bill, and paying the lot space rent.

Since joining the Ohio General Assembly, I have served on the Public Utilities Committee. Public utilities law in Ohio is very complicated, so I work closely with the Ohio Consumers' Counsel and others to help me interpret many of the bills that come before us. One of the things I have learned about Columbus is that there are not a lot of folks who are on the side of consumers. This is probably because there is not a lot of money to be made in that line of work.

Many good ideas come before our committee - energy efficiency, solar, and other programs that I support. However, when one digs deeper into some of these bills, you find hidden costs for Ohio's consumers. These hidden costs typically come in the form of what are called “riders” or the new name I recently uncovered in committee, “trackers.” These are hidden costs on our utility bills that you and I pay and don't even realize it, because in Ohio the utilities do not have to show you what all you are paying for on your monthly bill. You can find these costs, but it is not an easy task.

Folks, it takes a lot of courage to stand up to the multi-billion utility companies and others who support some of these costly programs, but I serve you. I am often the lone voice speaking for the people. I know from my experience growing up, as a member of Parma City Council, and in my new role that there are many Ohioans struggling right here in Parma, Parma Heights, and Cleveland, to make ends meet. So, when I am told, it is only another \$1.50 a month here or \$1.50 there, I remind the folks in the room that we are talking about real money. I am pleased to say that my work has resulted in preventing some of these added costs. Know that I will continue to advocate for you, despite the high pressure.

As always, if my office may be of service, please contact us via phone or email. I also invite you to visit my website at ohiohouse.gov/members/sean-p-brennan to learn more about how I am serving you and to sign up for my monthly newsletter. It is an honor to serve you!

Sincerely,

Sean Patrick Brennan

State Representative, District 14
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215



I am known for asking questions in the five committees on which I serve. I am fair, respectful, and willing to compromise, but always looking out for Ohio's consumers.

Representative Sean Patrick Brennan Passes Second Bill Out of the Ohio House of Representatives

COLUMBUS: Entities claiming to solicit donations for charity via collection receptacles will now have to prove that what they collect is truly benefitting charitable causes.

House Bill 184, introduced by State Representatives Sean Patrick Brennan (D-Parma) and Adam Bird (R-New Richmond), requires that donation collection bins display visible information regarding the beneficiary organization, including where the donated goods end up, contact information for the entity, and how to access the financial agreement between any professional solicitor and the benefiting charity. Benefiting organizations seeking to place bins will also have to file an application with the Ohio General Assembly who will vet them as legitimately benefitting charities.

“Some shady individuals and organizations have been known to use these bins for profit under the ruse that they further charitable purposes, creating an unfair advantage for dishonest operators over legitimate charitable organizations - literally *boxing out* good actors,” Brennan explained in his testimony on the bill.

The Ohio Attorney General’s office concurs with Brennan indicating that some for-profit entities have been found to place donation bins that are nearly identical to their non-profit counterparts. “This is deceptive to the public who might otherwise think twice about donating items to a for-profit entity when they intended their donation for a charitable purpose,” said Corey Jordan from the Attorney General’s office.

HB 184 will establish transparency requirements and enforce compliance, ensuring that donations genuinely serve their intended charitable purposes, including veterans’ organizations, Special Olympics, Goodwill, and other legitimate charities and ensuring that donations reach those who genuinely need them.

Rep. Brennan who served on Parma City Council for 19 years, explained that his concern about deceptive bins began during his years on city council. In fact, he championed a city ordinance regulating the placement of bins in the city. “I found that, not only were unscrupulous operators deceiving donors, but their improperly maintained bins posed safety hazards in the public right-of-way to pedestrians, bicycle riders, and drivers and created blight in the community. Further, often unsightly donation collection bins, that are very difficult to move, given their size and weight, show up without a property owner’s permission,” Rep. Brennan added.

Reps. Brennan and Bird contend that these deceptive practices undermine trust in the charitable sector.

The bill also includes language that will prohibit charitable solicitors from utilizing robocalls to solicit donations and that any entities soliciting via phone keep records of their scripts and recordings of calls for review by the Attorney General’s office.

The Ohio House of Representatives passed HB 184 with a vote of 85-5. “This bill is another example of how, when Democrats and Republicans work together, good policies that benefit all Ohioans result,” Brennan said.

HB 184 is now on its way to the Ohio Senate for consideration.



People first.

VOTED OUT OF COMMITTEE

H.B. 184 - Regards charitable solicitations

State Representative Sean Brennan
Ohio District 14

State Rep. Brennan Works With Eagle Scout To Light Up Script Parma Sign

A few years back I had a goal of bringing a script sign, like the popular ones in Cleveland, to Parma. Thanks to the generosity of many individuals and businesses, a sign was produced and donated to the City. From the very beginning, my vision included lighting, benches, a selfie stand, and flamingo artwork. Therefore, I was very pleased when Parma Boy Scout Nathan Tohati approached me about an Eagle Scout project. I told him about my hopes for the sign and he got to work making it happen.

A member of Boy Scout Troop 221 out of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Nathan raised hundreds of dollars, received several donations of materials, and put together a group of volunteers to spruce up our script Parma sign with LED lighting and all of the other accompaniments I requested. In fact, the colors of the sign can be changed for special events and holidays! The large pink flamingo was donated by Mr. Bob Funk in honor of his wife and daughter whom he lost to breast cancer. A tip of the District 14 hat to Parma Mayor Timothy DeGeeter and Service Director Tony Vanello and his crew for supporting and assisting with the project. Thank you and congratulations to Nathan for his community service and achieving the coveted honor of Eagle Scout!



State Representative Brennan Announces Body-Worn Camera Funding For Local Police

COLUMBUS – The Parma, Parma Heights, and Cleveland Metroparks Police Departments are set to receive over \$125,000 to help cover the costs associated with body-worn cameras State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan (Parma) has announced.

The funding is part of the Body-Worn Camera Grant Program which was funded as a result of House Bill 33, which Brennan supported. In all, the bill sets aside \$5 million for 2024 and another \$5 million in 2025 for the program. This year 108 local police departments will receive funding.

“Among my priorities as state representative is to put my nearly two decades of experience on Parma City Council to work in a bipartisan fashion at the Statehouse to bring dollars back home to enhance the safety of and quality of life for the community. This victory is a tangible example of that commitment,” Brennan said.

The Body-Worn Camera Program was created in 2021, and has funded over 300 local law enforcement agencies. This year Parma will receive \$64,890, Parma Heights is set to receive \$32,853.41, and the Cleveland Metroparks \$29,446.

“Body cameras protect our law enforcement officers who put their lives at risk every day for us. They also protect residents. I am honored to be in a position to help put taxpayer dollars to work for causes like this,” Brennan explained. “I am also proud of Mayors Timothy DeGeeter and Marie Gallo, as well as Metroparks Director Brian Zimmerman for applying for the grants. This shows that they are being creative at seeking dollars to strengthen the communities they serve,” Brennan added. Brennan represents Ohio House District 14, which encompasses all of Parma and Parma Heights, as well as parts of Cleveland’s West Park and the Cleveland Metroparks.



State Representative Brennan Out in the Community



1: Visiting my friend, former Parma Law Director Timothy Dobeck, our newly sworn-in judge in Parma Municipal Court.

2: While visiting the West Side Catholic Center, I had the honor of running into Parma's Patrick McCune who serves as the WSCC's culinary arts instructor.

3: I was honored to wish a happy 102nd birthday to Parma's Ann Woehrmann recently.

4: Presenting a commendation to Parma's Shirley Kessler for all of her time, love, and support for our military veterans

5: Parma City Councilwoman Monica Wilson visited me at the Statehouse recently. She and I communicate regularly about the issues facing our communities and the state.

6: St. Patrick Catholic Church celebrated 175 years recently. I as honored to present Pastor Fr. John Pfeifer with a resolution from my colleagues and I in the Ohio House of Representatives.

7: Thanks to Parma plow driver Walter O'Malley who allowed me to join him as he unclogged the streets of Parma from the recent blizzard.

8: Visiting Ms. Harb's kindergartners—the class of 2036 (!) at Pleasant Valley Elementary.

[State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan's Website](#)

Please check out my website to keep up on the hard work I am doing on your behalf.

ohiohouse.gov/members/sean-p-brennan