

State Representative Richard Dell'Aquila

Ohio House District 15

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| April 2023



Committees:

- *Financial Institutions (Ranking Member)*
- *Aviation and Aerospace*
- *Commerce and Labor*
- *Economic and Workforce Development*
- *Ways and Means*

Dear Neighbor,

As the April weather continues to warm up, so do the various pieces of legislation proceeding through House committees and onto the floor. One of the most important is HB 23, the approx. \$13 billion two-year transportation budget I worked on, and was proud to support and vote for in March. It passed the House 74-21 as well as the Senate, and has now been signed into law by the Governor. This is arguably the **largest job creating legislation in Ohio history**, and also includes several important railroad safety regulations arising from the tragedy in East Palestine. (Please see my March newsletter for information and photographs of our visit to the E. Palestine derailment site). Later in this issue, there will be more about some of the other pending House bills.

Here are just a few of the provisions of HB23:

- \$1.5 billion for large, efficiency and capacity-adding projects such as urban interstates
- \$7 billion for bridge and highway construction and public transportation
- \$360 million for dedicated bridge safety upgrades
- \$1 billion for the Rural Highway Fund.
- Improved railroad safety requirements, including railside detectors, and mandated inspection and reporting coordination with the Ohio PUCO, ODOT and EPA

I hear regularly from constituents concerned that the 67 to 32 super-majority in the House will prevent effective legislative efforts, since the majority holds full control. This impression may arise in part from the deep partisan disagreements in the U.S. Congress. However, I am happy to report that, so far the actuality in the Ohio House has been quite different. With some exceptions, the bipartisan working relationship between most members has been mostly cordial, issue focused and productive. This is not to say that members of both parties don't have strong differences, even within their own party. However, there is general recognition of the importance of getting the job done for our constituents.

Human nature being as it is, there are always divisions within any political party. By now, you may have heard of the controversy in the majority caucus over the election last January of the Speaker of the House. Although there are indisputable lingering effects of that dispute, it has also created a larger framework for increased bipartisan collaboration on several fronts, working "across the aisle" for agreements that would have been unlikely at best a few weeks ago. The responsibilities of office must be prioritized over political disputes.

In meeting these responsibilities, as in my prior two decades service as Mayor, Councilmember and Safety Director, my approach has always been one of building relationships with members and finding areas of common interest, but always holding on to core principles. That means vigorous, civil, debate where called for and continuing to ask hard questions. No one has a corner on good, practical, ideas.

I hope you will find the contents of this newsletter informative and helpful. Please feel free to reach out to me or my Legislative Aide, Cole Weidman, with anything we can assist you with. As always, **Thank You** for the opportunity to represent you and all of District 15 in the Ohio House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Richard Dell'Aquila

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Legislative Updates: Protect Ohio's Children Act and Notice of Tax Certificate Sales

I recently introduced legislation to amend Ohio's Revised Code regarding Criminal Child Enticement. Ohio Revised Code Section 2905.05(A) was declared unconstitutional in 2014 by the Ohio Supreme Court, wherein the Court ruled that the statute was unconstitutionally overbroad. Subsequently, local law enforcement and prosecutors have been uncertain of how to enforce this statute within the confines of Ohio law. Thus, I introduced the Protect Ohio's Children Act to clean up the constitutional problem with this section of the Ohio Revised Code and to ensure that local prosecutors can confidently charge suspects to thoroughly protect our community's children and across the state. I will be sure to update as we are scheduled hearings for this bill.

I also crafted and introduced HB 134 with Rep. Tavia Galonski to require county Treasurers to provide 30 days advance notice of their intent to sell tax certificates (delinquent property tax liens) to all interested parties, including lienholders, discoverable through a title search. Under the existing system, I have been made aware that all parties involved are not consistently provided advance notice of these proposed sales.

This results in tax lien foreclosures and sheriff sales being completed before mortgage lenders can take action and assist the owner(s) of record, or make other arrangements to assist property owners and others preserve their property rights and lien priorities that often become jeopardized through court ordered tax certificate sales.

HB 134 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, on which I am a member. Hearings and witness testimony should commence soon.



Legislative Updates: Bills to be Aware of

In addition to my own legislation, there are several bills of note that I would like you all to be aware of; many of which impact most, if not all of us in some form or another.

[House Bill 1](#) would modify our state's current property tax and income tax rates with the goal of expanding the state's tax base and increasing revenue; however, as I described in last month's newsletter, the cost of this transition could result in millions of dollars being lost throughout Ohio's cities and municipalities, leading to local governments and school districts cutting services as a direct result of this legislation, or going to their voters for increased tax revenue. [Click here](#) to watch previous Committee hearings that I took part in regarding this bill.

[Senate Bill 1](#) recently passed the Ohio Senate and is currently in our Economic and Workforce Development Committee—the bill would reform the State Board of Education and its role within Ohio, removing public oversight and local representation from Ohio's voters. The bill would then give many of the powers of the State Board of Education's elected members to appointed members, cutting out any voter choice of members. It should be remembered that 8 of the 19 members of the current State Board of Education are already appointed by the Governor with Senate advice and consent, so the administration already has substantial control under the current system.

We anticipate more hearings on this bill in the near future.



Legislative Updates (contd.)

[House Joint Resolution 1](#) was reintroduced from last General Assembly with the goal of amending the Ohio Constitution to require an increase to a 60% vote to approve of any amendment. While proponents argue that good ideas will still pass this threshold, it is alarming that a 40% minority vote of Ohioans would be permitted to block amendments compared to the majority rule that has been required to amend the Constitution for years in Ohio.



Around the District

Akron Cleveland Association of Realtors (ACAR) has two grant opportunities available:

Home for All Community Fund Grant – One local housing-related non-profit organization located in Cuyahoga, Portage, or Summit Counties will be awarded a \$10,000 grant. Organizations are invited to apply no later than April 30, 2023, for consideration. [To learn more and access the application, click here.](#)

Place Making Grant – ACAR is also accepting proposals for place making projects that will be completed in this calendar year. Applications may be submitted by local gov-

ernment entities or local non-profit organizations located in Cuyahoga, Portage, or Summit Counties. One grant may be awarded in each county. Realtor and ACAR involvement is required. [You can learn more and find the application here.](#)



The **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)** will receive complaints if your internet service is not what your carrier claims they are providing. For inquiries, [click the link here.](#)

The **MetroHealth Minority Men's Health Fair** will be held **April 27th from 5:00pm—8:30pm**, with over 30 free screenings that participants can choose from. For more information, visit www.metrohealth.org or by phone at **(800) 554-5251**.



Scan the code at the left or call **216-957-3862** to register for your free health screenings at a convenient MetroHealth location near you: Main Campus, Cleveland Heights, or Ohio City.

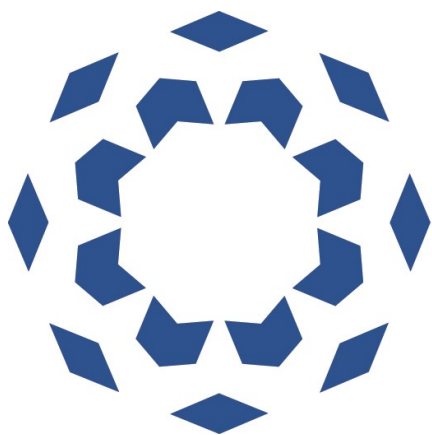


From the District (contd.)

Cleveland MetroParks' Summer Camp scholarships are available to help cover the cost of their **Summer Nature Camps**. Recipients of SNAP, Medicaid, or the National School Lunch Program are eligible to apply. Visit www.clevelandmetroparks.com/camps or by calling **216-954-3400**.



The Cleveland Public Library is offering few online courses regarding LinkedIn Learning, Northstar Digital Literacy, and more using your library card. For more information, visit their website by [clicking here](#).



CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Participatory Budgeting Cleveland is an organization working to organize and help residents so that they have a more direct say in how local government budgets are spent. To learn more, visit their website by going to www.pbcle.com.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month (NCAPM), an initiative since 1983 dedicated to promote the awareness, treatment, and prevention for Child Abuse and Neglect. Office of District 15 & many others, stands alongside Child Welfare Professionals and Child Abuse Prevention Organizations to strengthen and support families in our community.



#OhioWearsBlue takes place on the second Wednesday of every April for child abuse prevention month. This year we encourage all Ohioans to wear blue in support for child abuse prevention on April 12th.

Child Care Worker Appreciation Week

Child care workers are some of our most essential workers, caring and nurturing our children through compassion, patience, and kindness. This year's Child Care Worker Appreciation Week honors and remembers the child care workers who were killed in the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

CHILD CARE WORKER APPRECIATION WEEK

April 16-22

Childcare workers are celebrated this week, including teachers, nannies, and caregivers, all of who are essential workers in helping working parents continue to provide for their families.



Ohio House
Democrats