

State Representative Richard Dell'Aquila

Ohio House District 15

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| **May 2023**

Committees:

- *Financial Institutions (Ranking Member)*
- *Aviation and Aerospace*
- *Commerce and Labor*
- *Economic and Workforce Development*
- *Ways and Means*
- *Emergency Services Internet Protocol (ESINet) Steering Committee*

Dear Neighbor,

For over 100 years, amendments to the Ohio Constitution have been decided by a majority vote. On May 10, 2023, the General Assembly approved legislation creating an August 8th special election to ask you, the voters, to approve a constitutional amendment to increase the threshold to pass future constitutional amendments from 50% plus to 60% plus of the votes cast.

The state legislature passed this legislation just a few months after a December 2022 vote that eliminated August special elections in Ohio. Proponents at the time considered these special elections too costly and plagued by low voter turnout. It is predicted that the August 2023 special election will cost taxpayers upwards of \$20 million.

If successful, this increase to 60% will come into effect for the November 2023 general election, in which several constitutional and citizen-led amendments may be on the ballot. I and other House members have received letters from many constituents as well as former Ohio Attorneys General and Governors—on both sides of the aisle—who oppose deciding this important constitutional issue in a low turnout August special election.

Regardless where we all stand on the other potential constitutional amendments in November, the future consequences of this proposed change to 60% for passage will dramatically alter Ohio's long-standing one person, one vote, system. Many issues in our state's past would have been affected and would have failed in a 60-40 voting system, including funding for environmental protection, roads, schools, infrastructure and job creating initiatives, just to name a few.

This August 8th will be our opportunity to vote on whether these important decisions should be decided by the current simple majority or by a minority of just over 40% of the vote. Whether you support or oppose this change in the way we amend our constitution, all Ohioans should let their voices be heard and vote in this critical election.

As always, 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. And as always, **Thank You** for the opportunity and honor to represent you and all of District 15 in the Ohio House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Richard Dell'Aquila

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Advocacy Updates: May 2023

MEMORIAL DAY

Ohio House Democrats



On Memorial Day, we honor the courage and bravery of the Americans who gave the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that we remain the land of freedom, dignity, and opportunity. It is right and good that we honor their memories. From the time when we began calling the holiday Decoration Day to the present, it has always been important to remember and to teach our children that these fallen American heroes, in the words of Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, “...shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

May is National Military Appreciation Month, a time to recognize and pay tribute to all members of the military.

Congress designated May as National Military Appreciation Month in 1999 to ensure that we appreciate and honor the men and women of our armed forces that keep us safe each and every day. House Democrats will continue to advocate for active military and veterans so that they receive the resources and support they deserve.



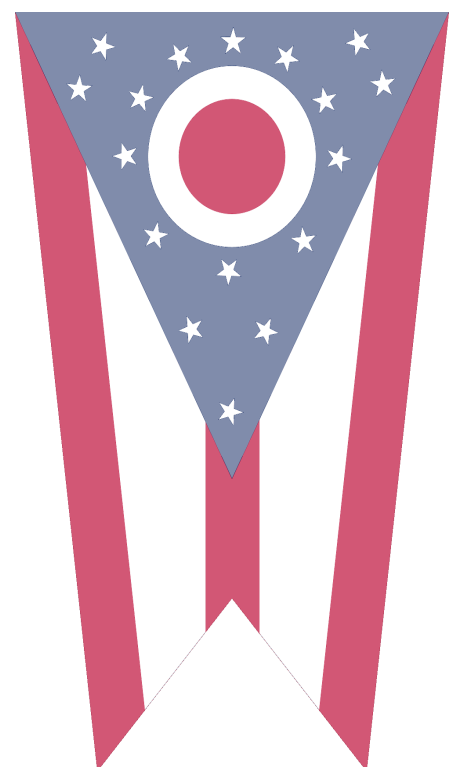
Federal “Job Hubs” Planned for Ohio Workforce Development

Ohio has become a leader in business attraction and innovation, with examples including Honda of America and the recent Intel manufacturing facility. These developments increase the need for a technically proficient workforce capable of stepping into these new roles.

We are pleased to learn that the federal government is about to launch several “workforce hubs” around the country, designed to help invest in our labor force with tangible skills for these high-paying jobs. Ohio will be one of the first states to receive this economic boost in 2024. These hubs will not require federal funding to operate.

Workforce development is a crucial link to ensure a technologically proficient and diverse workforce. Apprenticeships and programs with employers, schools, unions, and state and local governments, all play a vital role in attracting and maintaining business development and lead to higher wages, better housing, and a positive cyclical effect to our economy and state.

These hubs will help train Ohioans and close the skill gap for the ever-growing demand for skilled workers in advanced manufacturing, space, semiconductors, clean energy, and medicine—all without requiring a four year degree.





Advocacy Updates (contd.)

We are fortunate to have some of the best healthcare facilities in the world in our own backyard. Among those facilities, Metro General Hospital's Main Campus is located in our own House District 15. Here is a list of some MetroHealth facilities and addresses in case they are ever useful to you and your family.



State Road Family Practice

12744 State Road
North Royalton, Ohio 44133

Brooklyn Health Center

5208 Memphis Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44144

Old Brooklyn Medical Center - Recovery Resources

4229 Pearl Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

The Glick Center - Main Campus Medical Center

2500 MetroHealth Drive
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Broadview Heights Sports Medicine and Physical Therapy Cleveland Sports Institute

1 Eagle Valley Court, Suite 204
Broadview Heights, OH 44147

Old Brooklyn Health Center

4229 Pearl Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

AFTERSCHOOL CHILDHOOD ENRICHMENT (ACE) EDUCATION SAVING PROGRAM

The ACE Program provides families with a **\$1,000 credit per child (ages 6-18)**. The credit can be used for a number of varied summer enrichment programs, including:

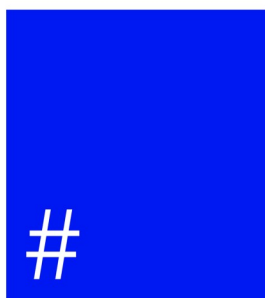
- Before- or after-school educational programs
- Day camps, including camps for academics, music, and arts
- Tuition for learning extension centers
- Curriculum and materials for homeschool

families

- Educational, learning or study skills services
- Tuition for learning pods
- Field trips to historical landmarks, museums, science centers and theaters, including admission, exhibit and program fees
- Language classes
- Music lessons
- Tutoring

Here is the link to learn more about this valuable program and how to apply:

<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Scholarships/ACE/Ohio-ACE-How-to-Apply>



STAND UP TO JEWISH HATE

The Foundation to Combat Antisemitism recently launched a new StandUpToJewishHate campaign to combat antisemitism and hate speech within all spaces—especially through social media.

I'm proud to raise awareness and to support our Jewish communities as we seek to celebrate and learn the cultural and religious backgrounds that makes our neighborhoods, district, and the state of Ohio so unique. [Click here](#) for more info.



Legislative Updates

I recently introduced **HB 148** to amend Ohio’s child enticement law by closing a loophole declared unconstitutional nearly a decade ago by the Ohio Supreme Court. Law enforcement need clarity and power to go after dangerous child predators.

Without true reform, courts and law enforcement have, at times, had no choice but to dismiss alleged violations of child predators. That’s why Ohio Republicans, including Governor Mike DeWine and former House Speaker Bob Cupp, supported similar reforms to the same law in 2017.

Correcting this statute is not as simple as some have claimed. In consultation with law enforcement, I have proposed constitutionally compliant language. The bill will be before the House Criminal Justice Committee soon, but a question has already been raised in the media about parental consent language to permit activities which would otherwise violate the statute as currently written.

The issue is that some parents have had their parental rights and responsibilities limited or even canceled by a court. And so it is important to define that only legally authorized parents may properly speak for their children. We are working on improving that language. The safety of our children is never up for negotiation.

Regarding the **Homestead Exemption**, I regret to report that **HB 57** was recently passed out of the House Ways and Means Committee on a party-line vote and awaits a possible vote on the House floor.

HB 57 indexes future increases in the exemption for inflation, but fails to provide current property tax reductions to immediately help Ohio seniors and disabled homeowners. I had supported a different version, **HB60**, which would have indexed the relief for inflation, but also provide current property tax reductions for those who qualify. Although **HB57** doesn’t go far enough to support our community’s qualifying homeowners like **HB 60** would have, any improvement to the current Homestead exemption is a needed change. I feel that this issue will continue to be debated as property values and taxes continue to rise.

Regarding a different issue, the state budget passed by the House is currently in the Senate and will come back to a conference committee soon to adjust the differences between the two versions. One of the items I had pushed for is the restoration of the **Local Government Fund (LGF)**. The LGF returned certain tax dollars back to local governments to help cover expenses, but was eliminated during the Kasich administration. This caused substantial financial difficulties for Ohio cities and other local governments and resulted in increased local taxes as well as cuts in local services for Ohio residents.

Since then, the LGF has only been partially restored, and the current budget proposal includes only a tiny increase in tax dollars returned by the state—to 1.7% (about a .3% increase).



Around the District

To celebrate Memorial Day and to honor those who have served and are currently serving, below is a partial list of in-district Memorial Day Parade events. **(I will be participating in the Seven Hills parade):**

Location:	Seven Hills (St. Columbkille)	North Royalton (Cemetery)	Broadview Heights (Crossings Shopping Center)	Brooklyn (Brooklyn Recreation Center)
Time:	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	9:00 AM	11:00AM



Around the District (continued)



NORTH ROYALTON—On March 29th, Cindy Richards— a fourth-grade teacher at North Royalton Elementary School—was recognized and named Teacher of the Year. She has been working as a teacher within North Royalton City Schools for 25 years.

We thank all teachers such as Cindy for their selflessness and commitment to ensure that each and every student receives a quality education. Congratulations, Cindy!



CLEVELAND—The city of Cleveland is planning on gaining two citywide, affordable internet services in the near future.

One option—mentioned before in a previous edition of the District 15 newsletter—would provide an \$18-per month broadband plan through a local non-profit called DigitalC. The second internet service would be through SiFi Networks, a company that is tentatively

planning on building fiber optic lines within the city of Cleveland.

Both of these services would have to be passed and approved through Cleveland City Council. To learn more, visit www.digitalc.org.

OLD BROOKLYN—The Memphis & Pearl revitalization project is in need of more public feedback regarding their design review process. For more information and to share your thoughts, visit:

www.oldbrooklyn.com/memphispearl

MEMPHIS & PEARL PROJECT



TWO WAYS TO SHARE YOUR INPUT ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL!

CLEVELAND: We are pleased to announce that the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority has been awarded a \$130 million federal grant to replace its fleet of railcars.

This process will begin with the Red Line—which operates between Cleveland Hopkins Airport and downtown Cleveland— and through eastside Windemere station.

These federal funds will allow RTA to purchase its first 24 Redline units.



RTA