

*I solemnly swear to  
support the Constitution of  
the United States and the  
Constitution of the State  
of Ohio, and faithfully to  
discharge and perform all  
the duties incumbent upon  
me as a member of the  
Ohio House of  
Representatives.*

*————— Oath of Office*

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# OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

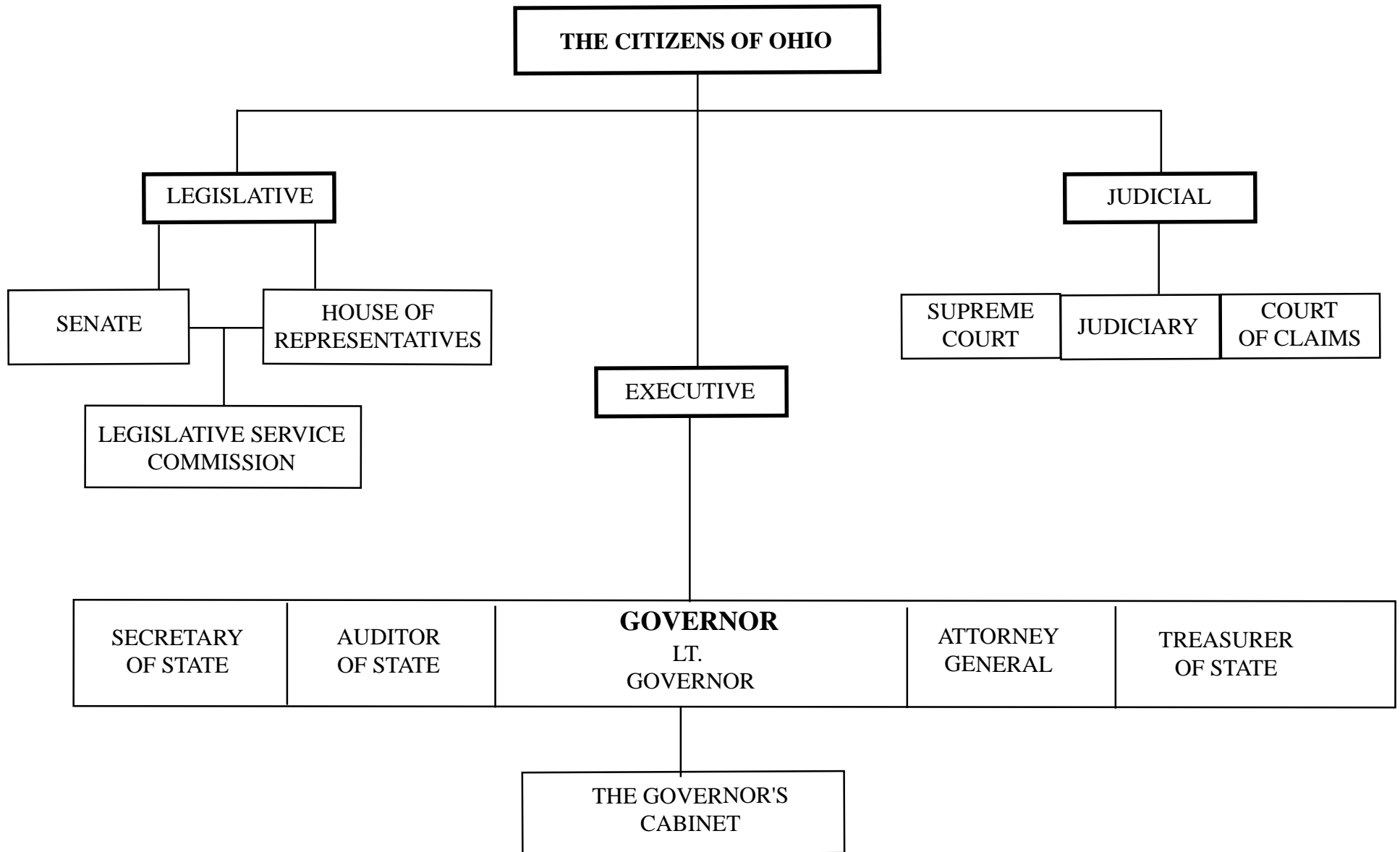
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WILLIAM G. BATCHELDER  
SPEAKER

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# STATE OF OHIO ORGANIZATION CHART

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# The Ohio House of Representatives



The Ohio House of Representatives is divided into 99 districts. Since 1967, these legislative districts have been determined on the basis of population, with each drawn to include approximately 110,000 persons. Because districts are drawn according to population size, Ohio's urban centers have a larger number of representatives compared to the rural areas. Franklin County alone has eight House districts. However in rural areas, such as in northwest Ohio, there can be as many as four counties in one district.

All members of the House must be citizens of the United States and reside in the districts they represent. Representatives are elected to two-year terms with a limit of four consecutive terms to which a member can be elected. Representatives have a wide variety of backgrounds. Some are teachers, farmers, insurance agents, small business owners, retailers, and doctors. One member is even a locomotive engineer.

A new legislative session is assembled every two years. The House of Representatives convenes on the first Monday in January of odd numbered years. There is no constitutional limit on the number of days the House can be in session. Therefore, the Assembly can respond without delay to special emergency situations. While in session, the House generally meets on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Committee meetings may be held any time before or after floor sessions. All House sessions and committees are open to the public.

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## The Leadership



The most important figure in the House of Representatives is the Speaker of the House. The Speaker is elected to this position by the entire House on the first day of session. The Speaker appoints the members and chairs of all committees, controls legislative procedures, oversees administration of the House and presides over daily sessions.

Other House leadership positions include the Speaker Pro Tempore, the Majority Floor Leader, the Assistant Majority Floor Leader, the Majority Whip, and the Assistant Majority Whip for the majority caucus, and the Minority Leader, Assistant Minority Leader, the Minority Whip, and the Assistant Minority Whip for the minority caucus.

### **129th GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEADERSHIP**

**2011-2012**

#### **OHIO HOUSE MAJORITY LEADERSHIP**

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.....	WILLIAM G. BATCHELDER
SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE .....	LOUIS W. BLESSING, JR.
MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER .....	MATT HUFFMAN
ASSISTANT MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER.....	BARBARA R. SEARS
MAJORITY WHIP.....	JOHN ADAMS
ASSISTANT MAJORITY WHIP.....	CHERYL L. GROSSMAN

#### **OHIO HOUSE MINORITY LEADERSHIP**

MINORITY LEADER.....	ARMOND BUDISH
ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER .....	MATT SZOLLOSI
MINORITY WHIP .....	TRACY MAXWELL HEARD
ASSISTANT MINORITY WHIP.....	DEBBIE PHILLIPS

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# Responsibilities of the General Assembly

## The Role of a Representative

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### The Responsibilities of the General Assembly

The Ohio Constitution grants the General Assembly the power to enact the laws of this state. These must not conflict with the Constitution of the United States or the Ohio Constitution and cannot restrict the individual rights of all citizens.

The General Assembly also has the power to levy taxes and to delegate this same power to counties and municipalities. Furthermore, the Ohio Constitution requires members of the General Assembly to enact the necessary statutes for the formation of county and municipal governments. The General Assembly also specifies the conditions for elective office.

There are basically two types of legislation which are considered by the General Assembly: **bills** and **resolutions**.

Bills are introduced to enact new laws or to amend or repeal existing laws. Bills which have passed both houses of the legislature must be presented to the Governor for acceptance or rejection.

Resolutions, however, serve as formal expressions of the opinions and wishes of the General Assembly and do not require approval by the Governor. There are three types of resolutions: **joint resolutions**, **concurrent resolutions** and **simple resolutions**.

Joint resolutions are reserved for matters of great importance to the General Assembly. They are generally used to form joint legislative committees, propose amendments to the Ohio Constitution, memorialize Congress and ratify amendments to the United States Constitution. A joint resolution must pass both houses and be filed with the Secretary of State. Amendments to Ohio's Constitution are placed on the ballot of the next general election for approval by Ohio's voters.

Concurrent resolutions must also be adopted by both houses of the General Assembly. Concurrent resolutions are generally used as statements of policy by the General Assembly or to resolve procedural matters between the two chambers.

Simple resolutions involve only matters pertaining to the House of Representatives or the Senate respectively and are usually used to commemorate a person, group, or event or to state a policy of one of the chambers.

### The Role of a Representative

The role of a state representative is to develop and legislate a program derived from a variety of sources, including their districts, their political party, state agencies, interest groups, and the committees on which they serve;

- Request preparation of bills and amendments;
- Develop support for their proposals, and lend support for, or opposition to programs of other legislators;
- Review the **Calendar, Journal, and Bulletin** to keep informed on bills scheduled for committee hearings and floor action; Attend sessions, take part in debate, and vote on the business before the chamber;
- Exercise legislative oversight of the administration of state government and the state budget through committee hearings, personal contacts, review of reports, and investigation of complaints;
- Attend hearings and meet with constituent groups, both in Columbus and throughout the state to learn about new ideas, listen to the arguments for and against them, and to offer alternative plans when differences occur;
- Act as liaison between their districts and state and federal agencies, providing personal assistance to their constituents in handling their problems;

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# Legislative Committees

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Since the Ohio House of Representatives may consider over one thousand proposals during a two-year session, **legislative committees** are created to more thoroughly examine legislation and to allow for an open public discussion on the merits of the proposed legislation. Committees of the General Assembly are established early in a legislative session and membership is determined by the Speaker of the House. The most active committees in the House of Representatives are called **standing committees**. It is the function of the standing committees to hold public hearings on a bill. While the membership and titles of standing committees may vary from session to session, the House divides its committees into such areas as finance, education, judiciary, taxation, and public utilities.

In addition to standing committees, the Speaker frequently designates certain standing subcommittees. Subcommittees roughly consist of three to seven members to hear testimony, amend bills or prepare substitute legislation, and report back to the full standing committee. Committee chairs can also designate **nonstanding**, or temporary, subcommittees to deal with specific legislation.

In addition to standing committees, there are three other types of committees of the General Assembly. They are called select committees, joint select committees, and special committees.

Select committees are formed to undertake specific legislative tasks and are appointed by the presiding officers in either the House or the Senate.

Joint select committees are similar to select committees in that they are formed to deal with one particular legislative subject. The difference between the two is that joint committees are comprised of members from both the House and the Senate are appointed by the presiding officers in both the House and the Senate.

A third type of committee is called a special committee. Special committees are similar to both standing committees and select committees. These bodies deal with specific issues like a select committee, yet can last for several years like a standing committee. Special committee members can be appointed by the Governor, the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House.

## COMMITTEES OF THE 129th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Agriculture and Natural Resources
2. Commerce, Labor, and Technology
3. Criminal Justice
4. Economic and Small Business Development
5. Education
6. Finance and Appropriations
  - I. Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee
  - II. Health and Human Services Subcommittee
  - III. Higher Education Subcommittee
  - IV. Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee
  - V. Transportation Subcommittee
7. Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development
8. Health and Aging
  - I. Health and Aging Subcommittee on Retirement and Pensions
9. Insurance
  - I. Insurance Subcommittee on Workers' Compensation
10. Judiciary and Ethics
11. Local Government
12. Public Utilities
13. Rules and Reference
14. State Government and Elections
  - I. State Government and Elections Subcommittee on Redistricting
15. Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security
16. Veterans Affairs
17. Ways and Means



## ***1. THE STATE ANIMAL***

The Ohio legislature adopted the white-tailed deer, the state's largest game animal, as the state animal in May 1988. The white-tailed deer can be found in all of Ohio's 88 counties, although about 80 percent of the herd lives in hilly eastern Ohio.

## ***2. THE STATE INSECT***

In June 1975, the Ohio legislature declared the common ladybug, officially named the Ladybird Beetle, the state insect. The ladybug was chosen for its attractive markings and helpful eating habits.

## ***3. THE STATE BIRD***

Ohio adopted the cardinal as its official bird in 1933. A permanent resident of Ohio, the cardinal is known for its clear, strong song and brilliant plumage.

## ***4. THE STATE FOSSIL***

Ohio's state fossil is the isotelus, commonly known as the trilobite. This now extinct sea animal existed in Ohio 440 million years ago when salt water covered the state. It resembles the modern horseshoe crab and is about 14 inches long.

## ***5. THE STATE FLAG***

Ohio's state flag was adopted in 1902. The Ohio burgee, as the swallow-tailed design is properly called, was designed by John Eisenmann. The large blue triangle represents Ohio's hills and valleys, and the stripes represent roads and waterways. The 13 stars grouped about the circle represent the original states of the Union; the four stars added to the peak of the triangle symbolize that Ohio was the 17th state admitted

## ***5. THE STATE FLAG cont'd***

to the Union. The white circle with its red center not only represents the "O" in Ohio, but also suggests Ohio's famous nickname, "The Buckeye State."

## ***6. THE STATE SEAL***

The current design of the Great Seal of the State of Ohio was officially adopted in 1996. In the right foreground of the shield a full sheaf of wheat bound and standing erect; in the left foreground, a cluster of seventeen arrows bound in the center and resembling in form the sheaf of wheat; in the background, a representation of Mount Logan, Ross county, as viewed from Adena state memorial; over the mount, a rising sun three-quarters exposed and radiating thirteen rays to represent the thirteen original colonies shining over the first state in the northwest territory, the exterior extremities of which rays form a semicircle; and uniting the background and foreground, a representation of the Scioto river and cultivated fields.

## ***7. THE STATE MOTTO***

In 1959, the Ohio legislature adopted the state's motto, "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). An earlier motto, "Imperium in Imperio" (An Empire within an Empire) was adopted in 1865 but repealed two years later because Ohioans thought it too pretentious.

## ***8. THE STATE FLOWER***

The red carnation was adopted as Ohio's state flower in 1904 in memory of President William McKinley, who always wore a red carnation in his lapel.



## ***9. THE STATE TREE***

The nickname for Ohio and its inhabitants—Buckeye—became official in 1953 when the legislature named the American horse chestnut (or the Ohio buckeye) the state tree. The buckeye tree derives its name from its large, brown seeds, which resemble the eyes of the eastern white-tailed deer.

## ***10. THE STATE BEVERAGE***

Tomato juice was adopted as the state beverage in 1965. Ohio leads the country in the production of tomato juice and is second only to California in tomato growing.

## ***11. THE STATE GEMSTONE***

Flint, the state gemstone since 1965, is a smooth hard rock of sedimentary origin. The Indians used flint to make knives, spear points, and arrowheads. Later, Ohio settlers used it for flint-lock guns and millstones.

## ***12. THE STATE REPTILE***

The General Assembly in 1995 named the black racer snake as Ohio's official reptile. Jacob Mercer, as a fourth-grade student, initiated the designation when he sent a letter to state representatives and senators suggesting that Ohio name an official reptile. He and his classmates say they decided on the black racer snake because it is native to all 88 Ohio counties and is called the "farmer's friend" because it eats disease-carrying rodents.

## ***13. THE STATE FRUIT***

The fruit, *Lycopersicon esculentus*, commonly known as the tomato, was adopted as the state fruit in 2008.

## ***14. THE STATE NATIVE FRUIT***

The fruit, *Asimina triloba*, commonly known as the pawpaw, was adopted as the state native fruit in 2008.

## ***15. THE STATE AMPHIBIAN***

In 2010, the salamander, *Ambystoma maculatum*, commonly known as the spotted salamander, became the official amphibian of the state.

## ***16. THE STATE FROG***

The frog, *Rana catesbeiana*, commonly known as the bullfrog, was adopted as the official state frog in 2010.

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## ***THE STATE SONG***

*Beautiful Ohio* became the state song in 1969. The music was composed by Mary Earl, and the original lyrics were written by Ballard McDonald. In 1989, the Ohio legislature adopted an amendment to section 5.09 of the Ohio Revised Code that changed the words of the state song. The new lyrics are the work of Youngstown attorney Wilbert McBride.

## ***THE STATE ROCK SONG***

*Hang on Sloopy*, a favorite of the Ohio State University Marching Band, became the state rock song in 1985. Composed by Celina-born guitarist Rick Derringer, it was first recorded by the McCoys, a rock band from Dayton, in 1965.

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# Symbols of the State of Ohio - part 2

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1.



5.



2.



6.



3.



7.

**WITH GOD  
ALL THINGS  
ARE POSSIBLE**

4.



8.





9.



12.



10. and 13.



14.



15.



11.



16.



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# How a Bill Becomes Law

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A bill is a proposed change to Ohio's laws, called the Ohio Revised Code. Suggestions come from private citizens, interest groups, businesses, state agencies and other legislators. A bill can be introduced in either the House or the Senate.

**1. Introduction.** The Legislative Service Commission prepares the first draft of the proposal in proper legal form. The bill is then filed with the Legislative Clerk, who assigns it a bill number to be used throughout the entire legislative session.

**2. Rules and Reference Committee.** The title of the bill is then read on the House floor as a regular order of business. After this formal introduction, called first consideration, the bill is then sent to the Rules and Reference Committee. One of the responsibilities of this committee is to decide whether or not a bill should be sent to a standing committee for further consideration. The Rules and Reference Committee reports back to the full House its recommendations for committee assignment. The report of the Rules and Reference Committee constitutes the second consideration of a bill.

**3. Committee Hearings.** The real work of the legislature is performed in the standing committees. Here, the public assists legislators by testifying either for or against the proposal. Complex bills are referred to subcommittees for in-depth study. After all testimony has been considered, the committee can report the bill without changes, amend the bill and then report it, prepare a **substitute** bill, or to indefinitely postpone action which effectively kills the proposal for the remainder of the legislative session.

**4. Rules & Reference Committee.** After a bill has been reported favorably by a standing committee, the Rules and Reference Committee will then determine which bills shall be considered for passage by the entire House and on what date. This committee issues what is called

the **House Calendar**. The daily Calendar lists the bills for third consideration in the order they are to be considered by the House.

**5. Floor Action.** A bill receives third consideration when the full House considers it for passage. At this time, the bill's sponsor explains the content and purpose of the bill to the House membership. The members then debate the merits of the measure and may offer amendments. It may be passed, defeated, or action may be postponed until a later date. A constitutional majority of 50 votes is required to pass most legislation in the Ohio House of Representatives. Emergency measures require a two-thirds majority, while constitutional amendments demand a three-fifths majority for passage.

**6. The Senate.** Although bills may be introduced in either the House or the Senate, they must be approved by both chambers to become law. Once passed by the House, it goes to the Senate where it follows the same general hearing procedures. The Senate may pass the bill as is, or amend it and send it back to the House for approval. If the House concurs (agrees with the Senate changes), the bill goes to the Governor for signature. If the House does not agree with changes, a conference committee of three members from each house is appointed to resolve differences.

**7. Action by the Governor.** The Ohio Constitution requires the Governor to consider each bill passed by the General Assembly. If he approves the bill, it is signed and normally becomes effective after 90 days. Emergency and appropriation bills become effective immediately. If he vetoes legislation it is sent back to the General Assembly with an explanation for the veto. However, if three-fifths of the members of each chamber vote to override the veto, the measure becomes law. Finally, a bill becomes law if ten days after the measure is presented to him, the Governor has failed to take any action.

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# LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY

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**BILL**

A proposed change or addition to Ohio law.

**RESOLUTION**

A formal expression of the wishes of the Legislature and does not require approval by the Governor.

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

An official vote on a bill or resolution where each representative is called upon to vote.

**BICAMERAL**

A bicameral legislature is composed of two legislative houses. In the Ohio General Assembly, the two houses are the House of Representatives and the Senate.

**MAJORITY PARTY**

The political party having the most members in one house.

**MINORITY PARTY**

The political party having the fewest members in one house.

**CAUCUS**

A grouping of members determined by political party. (i.e. Republican Caucus). Caucus can also refer to a meeting of the minority or majority party members.

**DISTRICT**

The geographical area a legislator represents.

**CONSTITUENTS**

Voters in the district represented by a member of the General Assembly.

**SINE DIE**

Latin word meaning for an indefinite period. Marks the end of an Ohio General Assembly and means no further meetings of the House are scheduled.