



A Legislative Report from Rep. Ted Celeste

Representing the 24th District of Ohio • Upper Arlington, Grandview Heights and Parts of Columbus



Ted Celeste
State Representative

Dear Neighbors,

Amidst unprecedented economic times, the Ohio General Assembly has passed a balanced two-year state budget that will help our state recover from the national recession. It was a difficult process, but all parties worked tirelessly for a resolution. I am pleased that we crafted a budget that was approved by the House and Senate and signed by Governor Ted Strickland.

These are challenging and unique times. In this unpredictable economic climate, there are no easy answers. Families across Ohio are struggling, and the state has fewer resources available to meet greater needs. But we are preparing for a brighter tomorrow by prioritizing education and job creation – crucial components to position us for recovery once the national recession lifts.

The comprehensive education reform plan found in the budget will replace a broken funding system with one based on student needs. It focuses on evidence from successful schools around the country and incorporates the key elements of quality education. These include things like all-day kindergarten, smaller classes, improved teacher quality, and greater fiscal accountability for school districts. By investing in education, we will help prepare our children for the challenges of 21st century global economy.

The national recession has prompted some very tough decisions in the budget; however we were able to soften the impact to libraries by restoring two-thirds of the funds that were originally proposed to be cut. It is important to note that even after this difficult budget, Ohio's library system will remain the top state-funded library system per capita in the United States.

Health care coverage for Ohio families was also extended. The budget significantly lowers the amount an insurance company can charge a patient with a pre-existing condition so that more people can receive the care they need without devastating their pocketbooks.

We believe this budget supports Ohioans by leveraging our resources and creating opportunities for tomorrow. If you have ideas or suggestions for how to further strengthen Ohio please feel free to contact me or my Legislative Aide, Jeff Wise. Together we can ensure a brighter future for our state.

Sincerely,

Ted Celeste
State Representative

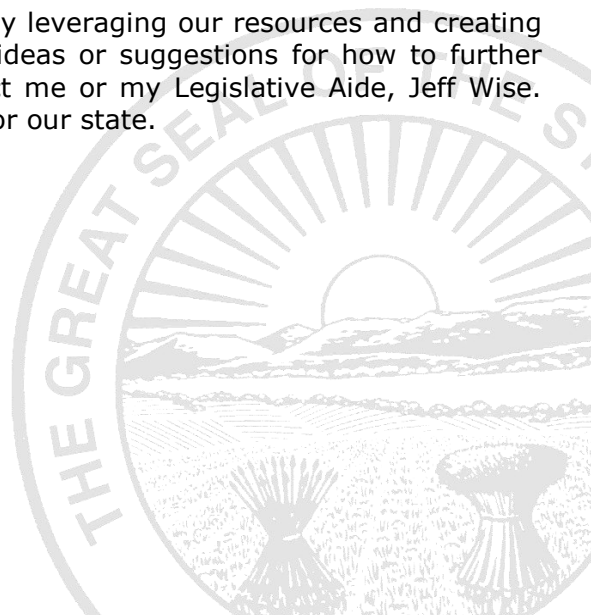
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Ohio House Passes Balanced Budget

Investing in Ohio's Future through Job Creation and Educational Excellence



It was a difficult process, but Ohio now has a balanced state budget. This two-year framework positions Ohio for both a short- and long-term economic recovery because it invests

in job creation and education. Both of these important tools allow Ohio to leverage resources and create a brighter future.

We have protected Ohio's commitment to affordable college tuition by limiting potential tuition increases to just 3.5 percent. We have also made many painful and unpopular spending cuts, but we have done so in a way that reduces the size of government while still protecting our most vulnerable Ohioans.

The national economic downturn has hurt states all across the country. Ohio faced similar challenges but we were able to provide a balanced budget that reduces spending, protects vital services and prioritizes education and job creation to help move Ohio's economy forward.

Highlights of Budget Priorities

• **JOB CREATION AND MOVING OHIO FORWARD**

While maintaining vital services for many vulnerable Ohioans was our first priority, we are also prioritizing job creation. We cannot move Ohio forward without a keen focus on making sure our economy is growing. This budget provides incentives for job creation efforts such as the new markets tax credit to encourage investments into low income areas. Additional efforts include a film tax credit, a sporting event incentive, a technology investment tax credit and an expansion of the job creation and job retention tax credit. We have also renewed the Venture Capital Fund, which provides loans to start-up companies. This is especially important in a tight credit market. We have also supported the Rapid Outreach Grants program.

• **COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION REFORM**

Ohio's future is in our young people, and their future depends on the best possible schools. That is why this budget includes a comprehensive education reform plan to replace the current broken funding system with one based on student needs. It also begins modernizing the classroom for the twenty-first century and significantly strengthens financial accountability and teacher quality.

• **KEEPING COLLEGE TUITION AFFORDABLE**

Even under the strain of a difficult budget, Ohio will keep its commitment to affordable college tuition by capping tuition increases at 3.5 percent for the next two years. Improving access to a college education is critical for Ohio to prepare its students for the challenges of the 21st

century economy. Compared to annual tuition growth rates of approximately 10 percent in the previous decade, this 3.5 percent cap will keep our promise to provide affordable, high quality college education for Ohio's students.

• **MAINTAINING VITAL SERVICES IN A TOUGH ECONOMY**

Ohioans are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the national economic downturn. However, even under the strain of a very difficult budget, Ohio will preserve vital services for those who are most vulnerable. We have worked to restore funding for a variety of programs such as county child and adult protective services, Ohio's food banks, mental health services, Help Me Grow, and Kinship Care. We have also dramatically reduced the original cuts to public libraries. COBRA Healthcare coverage will also be available to the families of those who have lost their jobs.



**....A Balanced Budget
in a Tough National
Economy**

Comprehensive Education Reform Plan Approved

Based on Students Needs; Funding System Constitutional



It has been more than a dozen years since Ohio's school funding system was declared unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court. Now, through House Bill 1, Ohio's Comprehensive Education Reform Plan will replace the state's broken school funding system with one based on the key elements of a quality education such as smaller classes, better-supported teachers and more learning time for students.

By investing in these proven education methods, Ohio will finally have a funding system that provides resources based on student needs, reduces reliance on local property taxes and directs resources to the students with the greatest educational challenges.

Ohio's economy will succeed when Ohio's schools succeed. The better the education our young people receive, the better equipped they will be to compete in the 21st century economy. Their skills and leadership will be crucial for the future prosperity of all Ohioans, and we need to ensure they have the best possible teachers and tools to learn.

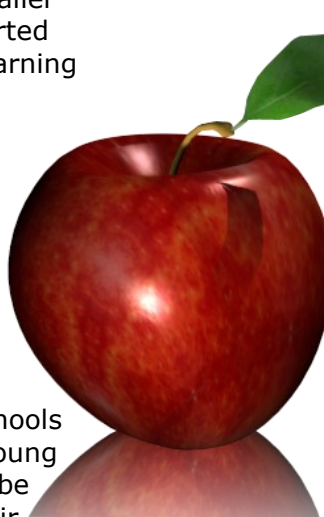
Ohio's Comprehensive Education Reform Plan

Replaces a Broken Funding System with One that Meets Every Student's Needs

- Provides resources to districts with the greatest educational challenges
- Lowers local taxpayer burden and increases the state's contribution
- Reduces the number of times schools will need voters to pass local levies

Begins Modernizing Ohio's Classrooms for the 21st Century

- Directs resources to methods that help kids learn – smaller classes, better teachers, more learning time
- Replaces the Ohio Graduation Test with the ACT to promote college advancement
- Leverages technology to enhance learning and prepares students with the skills to compete in today's ever-changing, global economy



Strengthens Accountability & Improves Teacher Quality

- Establishes regular review of school district spending plans
- Develops a residency program and enhances professional development opportunities
- Strengthens licensing standards for principals and disciplinary guidelines for teachers

Additional Highlights

- Requires school districts to offer all-day kindergarten.
- Reduces the five excused calamity days to three calamity days for the 2010-2011 school year, requires the State Board of Education to offer recommendations on extending the school year.
- Develops a new high school assessment system to replace the Ohio Graduation Tests (OGT) that consists of (1) a nationally standardized college prep assessment (2) a series of end-of-course examinations, and (3) a senior project.



Creating an Energy Efficient Ohio

Ohio House Leads Efforts Toward Smart Solutions

Energy efficiency is a hot topic across Ohio. It is important that we think outside the box to create smart energy solutions to reduce our usage and protect our environment for future generations.

The Ohio House has already made a strong statement in support of energy efficiency by voting to establish the Advanced Energy Resource Center at



Ohio University. The center will cultivate our state's green-collar economy by providing technical expertise to local governments looking to develop projects that incorporate advanced energy. It will also serve as a networking resource for local governments and advanced energy companies.

Legislators have also introduced H.B. 7, which requires any building constructed using state capital expenditures bill money to meet LEED certification. The LEED rating system and building certification are developed and administered by the U.S. Green Building Council, a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit coalition.

Obtaining LEED certification demonstrates that a building is environmentally friendly. Energy savings, improved indoor environmental quality and emissions reductions are some of the factors considered in the design and construction of a building.

There are environmental, financial and health benefits to earning LEED certification. Achieving certification allows companies to take advantage of a number of state and local government incentives.

Education is also going green. Legislation to

promote solar energy in Ohio's schools was recently passed by the House Alternative Energy Committee, which I chair. HB 113 aims to install solar panels on 25% of schools in Ohio within the next five years.

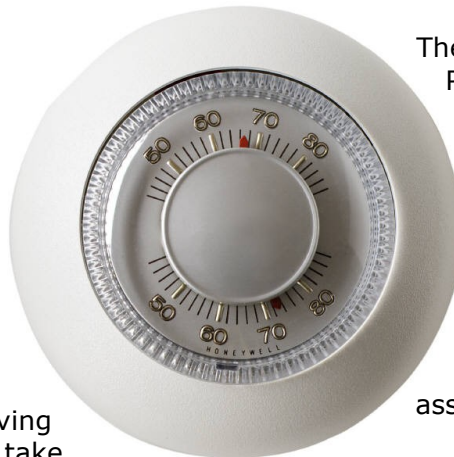
The bill also removes the obstacles for putting in renewable energy systems in schools by extending the amount of time school districts have to pay for the projects. In addition, school districts can apply for grants through the Advanced Energy Fund to finance the improvements.

Energy Saving Tips

Ohio is among the top ten energy users in the nation. Here are some ways you can conserve:

- This summer, turn up your thermostat a few degrees- you will see immediate results on your next bill. Each degree you change your thermostat saves you money and decreases the load on our power plants.
- Match your energy use to what you need. Use free daylight when you can. Turn off lights, appliances and equipment when not in use. Install and use motion sensors, time of day controls, and programmable thermostats.

Courtesy Ohio Department of Development



The Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) offered by the Ohio Department of Development helps Ohioans to reduce both their energy usage and utility bills. HWAP is available for free to residents who meet certain annual income levels. After an electrically-heated home has been "weatherized," it uses 13% less energy. That means lower bills, and fewer people needing payment assistance.

Investments in energy efficiency policies and programs have the benefit of saving Ohioans money, creating jobs, bolstering our economy, and creating a cleaner environment.

Legislative Survey

REPRESENTATIVE TED CELESTE
SEPTEMBER 2009

Your views on issues facing state government are important to me. Please take the time to share your opinion on the following topics. I look forward to hearing from you!

1. Do you support legislation to increase the penalties for illegal street racing in Ohio?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

2. Do you support legislation that sends non-violent deadbeat parents to community control programs rather than jail, with the goal of earning more money to pay off their child support debts?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

3. Do you support statewide efforts to update the passenger rail transportation system throughout Ohio- including possibly high speed rail?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

4. For state budgeting purposes during these difficult times, would you prefer legislators...?

- Cut Services
- Increase Revenues
- Other

5. Would you support an increase in the amount of insurance drivers must have in order to legally drive in this state?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

6. Should Ohio require insurance companies to provide coverage for conditions such as diabetes and autism?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

7. Would you like to see an increase in the use of solar panels, wind turbines and other renewable energy systems at schools and other government buildings?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

8. Please list what you believe to be the three biggest issues facing Ohio:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Additional Comments:

Please fold and return this form to me at the address listed on the other side. If you would like to receive information and legislative updates in the future, please provide the following information:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ E-mail: _____



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**Thank you for completing this legislative survey.
Please don't hesitate to contact my office
with any issues or opinions you may have!**

FOLD UNDER AND SECURE WITH TAPE

(PLEASE FILL IN YOUR ADDRESS)

PLACE STAMP
HERE
POST OFFICE
WILL NOT
DELIVER
WITHOUT
PROPER
POSTAGE

Hon. Ted Celeste
State Representative, 24th District
Ohio House of Representatives
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