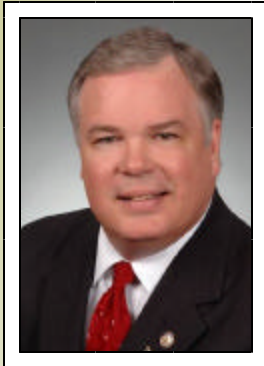




LEGISLATIVE REPORT

JOSEPH UECKER

SERVING THE 66TH DISTRICT



**State Representative
Joseph Uecker**

Term in Office: 2nd

Hometown: Miami Township

Standing Committees:

- *Commerce and Labor (vice-chair)*
- *Alternative Energy*
- *Health*
- *Local and Municipal Government and Urban Revitalization*
- *Public Utilities*

Dear Neighbors:

Summer is in full swing and although the General Assembly is not in session, we still have plenty of issues we are working on. I have been meeting with constituents in my district and helping them with their individual problems and issues. I also have been meeting with others not from my district who are just looking for help in various areas of possible changes in laws they feel are needed. It has been very interesting and probably the best part of this job.

Summers are not just filled with meetings here in the district. I travel to Columbus at least once a week. In fact, just a few weeks ago I traveled to the Statehouse in order to witness a bill that I sponsored signed into law by the governor. House Bill 56 will make it easier for property owners who rent space to manufactured home owners to regain use of their property should the renters skip town. The very next day I traveled back up to my Columbus office to meet with a very talented young lady, Hayley Madden, a soon to be sixth grader from McCormick Elementary School whose painting of beech trees in a forest was selected to be put on display in the Riffe Building in Columbus where all the legislators have their offices.

Another very important event that I took part in recently was a meeting with the governor and guests from another country who are looking at Clermont County to locate a corporate headquarters. The spent the morning with these individuals promoting Ohio and Clermont County as a great place to have a business and raise a family.

In addition to our legislative work, I am very proud of the level of service my staff provides to the citizens of the 66th District. If you have an issue or problem with a state agency, please feel free to contact my office. I can be reached by phone at (614) 466-8134, by e-mail at district66@ohr.state.oh.us, or by writing me, State Representative Joseph Uecker, 77 South High Street, District 66, Columbus, OH 43215.

Sincerely,

Joseph Uecker
State Representative
Ohio House District 66

**YOUR LEGISLATOR
NEEDS
YOUR HELP**

With hundreds of separate pieces of legislation to consider every year, legislators in Columbus need the opinion, advice and specialized knowledge of their constituents to guide them. It is impossible for any legislator to have detailed knowledge of the technicalities of every bill he or she must consider.

This means that even if you oppose a bill, legislators welcome your letters because you are providing them with knowledge they need to make decisions.

PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO OHIOANS

After several months of hard work and constructive debate House Bill 119, the State operating budget was completed and signed into law on June 30. The budget preserves and expands on the tax reforms from the last General Assembly and defends school choice in those areas of the state where the public education system is failing to adequately meet the needs of certain children. In addition, the budget implemented the largest property tax cut in Ohio history, allowing one in every four Ohio homeowners to take advantage of the new Ohio homestead exemption. Through this tax relief, approximately 775,000 seniors will pay no tax on the first \$25,000 of their home's values.

House Bill 119 is among the most fiscally conservative budgets in a generation. It places a focus on the state's economic future by continuing the phase-in of a 21 percent across-the-board income tax cut affecting every Ohioan. At the same time it provides an overhaul of the state business tax system and makes strategic investments in higher education to make Ohio more competitive for attracting jobs.

Tough choices had to be made, however the end result is a budget that we believe offers the best for Ohio as a whole. We can all be proud that a philosophy of fiscal discipline and government efficiency is the driving force in the

Legislature. The nearly unanimous support in both the Ohio House and Senate is a remarkable endorsement of our conservative ideals.

School Choice and the voucher program was a contentious issue. There are some instances of children who need from an education than our public schools can offer. It is not that our public schools are not performing well, recent data shows that our test scores are improving and that our children are receiving a better education with each year that passes. However, there are children who do not react the same to the traditional public school or those in failing schools that need to be placed in a better situation. These children are eligible for a voucher to help pay the tuition at a private school. If anyone is interested in learning more, I suggest they look to the Cleveland school district voucher program which I believe was the first and today most successful of the programs in terms of student achievement. There is no better endorsement of school choice in Ohio than for the Ohio House and Senate to vote near-unanimously in support of a state budget that continues the school choice programs that have provided essential educational options for nearly 100,000 Ohio children

The budget even brought Democrats around to embracing Republican tax cuts they once condemned. Our tax cuts and

business tax reform from two years ago are working. Businesses that were looking to leave Ohio are now staying and re-investing in their companies. Out of state companies are now choosing to move their operations to Ohio. This year Ohio was ranked number one in a national magazine – *Site Ready* – for having the most, and best, site ready locations for businesses to come to Ohio.

There were, of course, portions of the budget I wish we could have improved upon. However, the budget passed in June supports the majority of my policy positions and builds upon the efforts put forth by the Legislature two year ago.

After passing a budget and looking back there are always issues a legislator wishes were addressed. However, that is why we work all year long. There are still 18 months remaining in the 127th General Assembly and I intend to fight for the principals and issues that matter most to Ohioans. ☪

IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR OHIOANS

While visiting my son at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs a few years ago, I could not help but notice the inscription on one of the statues in the “Honor Court” which is an outside area between the famous Air Force Chapel and Arnold Hall (named after the legendary airman and father of the US Air Force, Hap Arnold). This inscription sends a powerful message to not just the Cadets who attend the Academy but to anyone who realizes its message. On the “Eagle and Fledgling” statue is written “Man’s flight thru life is sustained by the power of his knowledge”. Knowledge is the key to a successful life. Yes, I know that success can be defined in many ways, but any parent will immediately understand in their own ways what they feel success means for their child. Education is inevitably a major variable to success.



When members of the Ohio General Assembly met at the beginning of the 127th General Assembly to discuss setting legislative priorities, I am happy to assure you that the number one priority discussed was public education. This was evidenced by the reserving of the name House Bill 1 for the bill that is dedicated to Governor’s platform on public education. In any General Assembly, the first five or ten House Bill numbers typically are reserved right away to signify the importance (priority) of that issue. Again, public education is our number one priority.

Education is the foundation for success in life. This is true for individuals as well as society as a whole. I believe this and so do my colleagues in the General Assembly. To that end, it is no wonder that public education and all the topics associated with it take up so much of the time of the General Assembly.

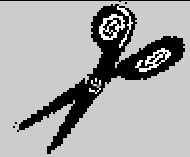
The actual amount of state funds going to educate our youth has steadily risen over the last decade well above the rate of inflation but unfortunately, outpaced by school spending. Remember, state funds are really your funds. Whether the funds are gathered from income taxes, property taxes, or sales taxes they are your dollars. To get more dollars for the state budget means we have to get more dollars from the taxpayers. This is why it is my priority to make sure that each and every tax dollar is spent as wisely and responsibly as possible. This is also why I support measures for accountability in every area of state spending.



Ohio has a long road ahead in terms of public education. Our economy depends on a competent, educated workforce. But for all the public funds we have poured into our public education system, still we only graduate 85 percent of our students from high school. Seven out of 10 students who graduate from high school will not have completed the courses necessary to succeed in college or in the workplace. Only three of every 10 students who attend high school will go on to earn a college degree. Ironically, statewide average statistics seem to show that the more money we pour into our education system, the less our students achieve. Our work is cut out for us. Last year’s Ohio Core bill raised the standards our children will have to achieve in high school in order to go on to college. We put millions of dollars aside to prepare teachers for the challenge. Think of it as a down payment on our future.

It is going to be tough to fund the challenges that lie ahead in terms of public education and I am willing to participate in the task of finding those funds. I will also participate in finding ways to reduce spending in all areas of government and education in order to put more dollars into the classroom. ☞

CONTACTING YOUR STATE GOVERNMENT:



HELPFUL STATE TOLL-FREE NUMBERS

Attorney General Consumer Protection	800-282-0515
Child Support Hotline	800-686-1556
Crime Victim Assistance	800-582-CVSS
Home Energy Assistance Program	800-282-0880
Legislative Information	800-282-0253
Medicaid Consumer Hotline	800-324-8680
State Highway Patrol (Highway Help)	877-7-PATROL
Tax Questions	800-282-1780
Travel and Tourism	800-BUCKEYE
Unemployment Hotline	800-251-OBES
Utility Consumer Complaints	800-282-9448
Workers' Compensation	800-OHIO-BWC
Ohio Web site	www.ohio.gov
House Web site	www.house.state.oh.us

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

It is important for me to hear the opinions and concerns of constituents in the district.

You can reach me by mail, phone, fax or e-mail. My staff or I will assist you in any way we can.

77 South High Street,
District 66
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111

Columbus Office:
(614) 466-8134

Columbus Fax:
(614) 719-3966

E-mail:
district66@ohr.state.oh.us

HOW TO
WRITE
YOUR LEGISLATOR

Every legislator considers many bills on a wide range of subjects. Therefore, the first essential aspect of an effective letter to a legislator is a specific reference to the particular bill which interests you. The second important element is a brief description of the effect the bill's provisions will have on you. The third component of a convincing letter is your advice to your legislator as to how you think he or she should vote on the bill. ☞

