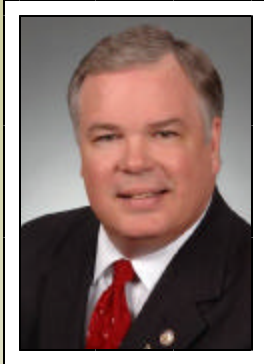




LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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:

Moving into the fall, members of the Legislature are back in full session working hard on important legislation. So far, 2007 has been a tremendously productive year. My colleagues and I in the General Assembly passed one of the most fiscally conservative budgets in the last 40 years this summer, extending tax cuts to seniors and providing health care to children and seniors.

During the remaining months of 2007, I will be looking at issues important to all Ohioans such as energy, education and health care. These are paramount topics to focus on if we are going to continue moving Ohio forward in the future.

Details on several of our accomplishments so far this year can be found inside this newsletter. As your state representative, one of my goals is to keep you informed about what is happening in Columbus, and this newsletter is one way for me to do just that. I hope you find it useful.

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. 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.

HELPING OUR CHILDREN, PREPARING FOR OUR FUTURE

In this state budget members of the Ohio House :

- Maintained educational choices that meet the needs of a diverse population of students, including those in community schools and e-schools.
- Provided a way out for students trapped in failing schools by restoring voucher and school choice options.
- Provided \$12 million in state funding for Children's Hospitals.
- Created the groundbreaking \$100 million Choose Ohio First Scholarship for Ohio's college students.
- Ensured the quality of Ohio's universities by increasing funding to institutions of higher learning by \$333 million over the next two years.
- Increased funding by more than \$4 million for children with severe medical handicaps.
- Continued to provide record funding for schools across the state.
- Increased the number of children eligible for the state health insurance program by approximately 30,000 kids. This program provides health insurance for children in families with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, but low enough to make it difficult to afford private insurance coverage.
- Increased Funding for Early Childhood Education Programs for Ohio's preschool students.
- Provided \$2 million in funding for hungry children through the Children's Hunger Alliance.




TAX RELIEF FOR SENIORS – THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

With the number of senior citizens in Ohio expected to increase dramatically in the coming years, it is essential that we begin to prepare now to meet the increased economic and health care needs of our senior citizens.

One way we can assist seniors is by providing them with meaningful property tax relief. Members of the Legislature included a homestead exemption in House Bill 119, the recently passed state operating budget. This proposal exempts the first \$25,000 of a home's value from local property taxes and is available to all Ohioans age 65 years and older as well as disabled individuals.

According to the Department of Taxation, the homestead exemption applies to approximately 775,000 homeowners, with each saving an average of more than \$400 a year. Local governments, school districts and other entities that are supported by local property taxes will be reimbursed by the state, ensuring they are able to continue to provide valuable services to their communities.

In order to pay for the homestead exemption, the budget provides for the securitization of Ohio's remaining tobacco settlement funds. By securitizing this money, Ohio will sell its rights to the revenue from these payments for a lump sum of approximately \$5 billion. Out of that money, \$2.2 billion will be used to continue school facilities projects throughout the state and the remaining \$2.8 billion will be used to pay off other types of debt. The yearly savings that result from not paying on the debt will be used to fund the homestead exemption.

To take advantage of the homestead exemption, eligible individuals must fill out an application certifying the home is the primary residence and the homeowner is 65 years old or disabled. You can find more information about the homestead exemption and print an application form by visiting the Department of Taxation's Web site at www.tax.ohio.gov. You can also contact your local county auditor's office. Applications must be submitted by October 1 in order for the exemption to be applied to the first property tax bill of 2008. 

AROUND THE DISTRICT



Representative Uecker with Hayley Madden, her brother Troy Madden, her aunt Dana Viglietta, and her grandmother Deb Madden.

As a member of the Legislature, I do more than work on legislation benefiting Ohioans. I take every opportunity I can to recognize the great constituents I have in the district. One girl in particular provided our offices in Columbus with some beautiful art work.

Hayley Madden (a participant in the Constituent Art Work Program) submitted a painting that now hangs in Columbus and wanted to come and see it along with members of her family.

The day of their visit, I met with them, showed them around the statehouse and gave Hayley the opportunity to see her work. Hayley came to Columbus with her aunt Dana Viglietta, her grandmother Deb Madden and her brother Troy Madden. I always welcome constituents taking the time to stop in and see me and to Hayley, again congratulations on your hard work and making our statehouse a better place to work.

Honoring Our Servicemen and Women

Each day, the brave men and women of our military place their own lives at risk in order to protect our freedoms. Their service often comes with great personal sacrifices for them and their families, and members of the Ohio House are hard at work on several pieces of legislation that recognizes the hard work and dedication of our veterans while easing the burden on them and their families.



Members of the House recently passed House Bill 273, legislation that honors Ohio veterans by creating certain specialty license plates and also designating memorial highways for soldiers who died while on active duty. The bill creates "Ohio National Guard Retired," U.S. Paratrooper and Civil Air Patrol license plates, which can be displayed by veterans, and also created the "Support Our Troops" license plate as another way for individuals to show their support of our troops at home and abroad. House Bill 273 is currently being heard in the Senate.

Other bills regarding veterans under consideration by the House include House Bill 60, which would allow county commissioners to provide a homestead exemption to qualifying members of the National Guard and reserve units of the Armed Forces who have been deployed outside the state. This bill is currently in the House Local and Municipal Government and Urban Revitalization Committee.

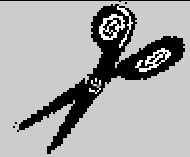


In addition, legislation has also been introduced that would exempt military retirement pay from personal income taxes. House Bill 112 will allow retired military members to keep more of their pay and encourage them to remain here in Ohio instead of moving to another state.



We owe a tremendous debt to those serving in the military, whether here at home or overseas. While we will never be able to fully repay them, members of the House will continue to pass legislation that honors their service and helps their families. 🇺🇸

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. ☞

