

| April 2021

State Representative Jeffrey Crossman

Ohio House District 15 Statehouse Legislative Update

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From The Desk of Rep. Crossman

Dear Neighbor,

In March, we reached a number of milestones in our fight against COVID-19 as a state and as a country. Here in Ohio, we commemorated the one-year anniversary of the first cases and deaths from this virus. Additionally, we surpassed 1 million total cases as a state.

While these milestones are a sobering reminder of just how difficult the past year has been for all of us, we're starting to see hope for better days ahead.

The current administration has been able to shatter predictions for the number of vaccines administered, and now, every American is eligible to schedule a vaccine far sooner than even the most optimistic expectations.

As of March 29, all Ohioans ages 16 and older are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Getting a vaccine is quick, painless and one of the best tools we have to eradicating this virus.

In order to get our economy back on track, kids back in school, and our social lives vibrant again, we need everyone who can to sign up for an appointment to get vaccinated. Every one of the vaccines currently on the market have been rigorously tested. They're safe, effective and have the capacity to save countless lives.

And while getting the vaccine is our best line of defense to end this crisis, it is also critical that we continue to take precautions we've known to work all along, from washing our hands and maintaining distance to wearing a mask and limiting time indoors with those who have not been vaccinated yet.

We're so close to turning the corner on this pandemic and have the tools in place to eradicate this virus, but it's going to take all of us to get it done. And it begins by scheduling a vaccine appointment.

To schedule your vaccine, visit gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. If you have additional questions about the vaccine, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

My office is always here to help as we continue to fight the virus. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to my office at Rep15@ohiohouse.gov or 614-466-3485.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeff Crossman".

Rep. Jeffrey A. Crossman
State Representative
15th House District

Contact Methods:

[Message/Email Us Directly with This Link](#)

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Ohio Passes Favorable Transportation Budget

On March 25, the Ohio House passed House Bill (HB) 74, the state's 2-year transportation \$8.34 Billion budget, which helps fund projects to improve our roads and bridges, and provides critical investments in Ohio's public transit infrastructure.

After historic investment in public transit over the past two years, the governor delivered an early proposal to the House that dramatically cut funding to transit systems throughout our state. Many in the Ohio House opposed these cuts and fought to reinsert funding for public transportation. As a former City Councilman, I know how much our community depends upon public transportation which is why we fought hard to insist funding be maintained. As people resume daily life activities, especially work, school, and doctors appointments, they need to be able to depend on Ohio's public transportation.

Democratic members successfully advocated and secured more than \$221 million over the next two years in funding public transportation, more than doubling the governor's initial proposed investment. "Finding a way to fund public transportation is critical for Ohioans" said **Rep. Crossman**. This is the essential link people have with their communities—their jobs, school, family and resources they need to enjoy a high quality of life." Rep. Crossman also believes that public transportation investments also provide job creation opportunities. "If people cannot get to work, businesses will relocate elsewhere—to states that find ways to connect people to cost effective transportation options. So we deem public transportation as an important tool to economic development in Ohio."

Other key wins in the transportation budget included

- Ensuring fairness and transparency of taxpayer dollars by requiring more highway construction and maintenance projects are subject to competitive bidding;
- Removing the governor's proposed hikes in vehicle registration and other fees to save Ohioans money;
- Securing funds for public transit vouchers for victims of domestic violence who need help getting to court, medical appointments and school.

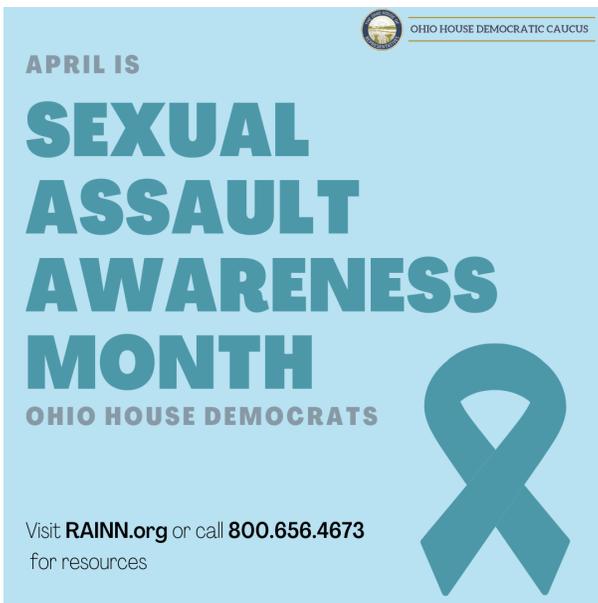


State Transportation Budget
#InvestInOhio



OHIO HOUSE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

Awareness Month Spotlight



April 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). SAAM is a time to stand with survivors and educate communities on how to prevent sexual violence.

Ohio House Democrats believe that everyone should be able to live safely and securely in Ohio. That means ensuring all survivors of sexual assault can fully access justice. House Dems have introduced numerous bills to support survivors,

including legislation to:

- Eliminate the statute of limitations for rape and sexual assault;
- Eliminate the marital rape loophole;
- Remove the cap on economic damages for violent crimes so survivors of sexual assault can access full compensation of their damages awarded by a jury.

If you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, help is available. Visit rainn.org/resources or **800.656.4673**.

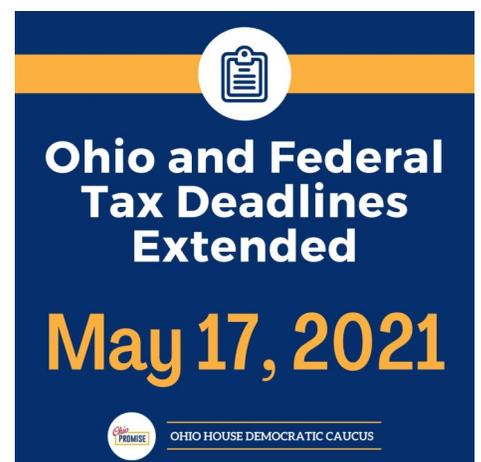
New Deadline for Filing Your 2020 Taxes

The deadline for Ohio and federal taxes has been extended to **May 17**.

Individual taxpayers can postpone federal income tax payments for the 2020 tax year originally due on April 15, 2021, to May 17, 2021, without penalties and interest, regardless of the amount owed.

This postponement applies to individual taxpayers, including individuals who pay self-employment tax. Penalties, interest and additions to tax will begin to accrue on any remaining unpaid balances as of May 17, 2021. Individual taxpayers will automatically avoid interest and penalties on the taxes paid by May 17.

Local tax deadlines may vary, so be sure to check your local government website for updates.





State Finally Releases Federal Funds To Assist Economic Recovery

At the beginning of the pandemic last year, the Federal government passed the CARES ACT that had significant funding support for state and local level programs to soften the blow from job losses and other economic disruption. In April, the Ohio House finally passed House Bills 167-170 that finally disbursed needed funds approved in the third round of CARES Act funding passed in December 2020.

Among the funds recently disbursed includes funding for rental and utility assistance programs (\$465 million), grants to businesses, veterans homes, and child care providers impacted by Covid-19 (\$299.9 million), funds for our schools to assist with costs associated with Covid (\$683 million), and \$19 million of federal funds to county boards of developmental disabilities serving school-age students, educational service centers, and joint vocational school districts. In total, funding for these programs totaled \$2 Billion in funding for programs that will help Ohioans through this period.

In addition, the state's controlling board appropriated additional funding related to assisting others impacted by Covid including:

- \$2.3 million to support scholarships for war orphans and children of severely disabled veterans
- \$2 million in grants for the Recycling and Litter Prevention Grant Program to provide for local governments, schools, non-profit organizations, and small businesses
- \$8 million in new funding to support under-insured and uninsured Ohioans battling HIV and \$32,496.70 to provide rapid HIV tests
- \$166,612 for the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to provide mental health instructor certification

In addition, the state disbursed \$73.1 million in federal funding to the Ohio Department of Transportation to support highway construction and improvement projects across the state, environmental investigations, and bridge and construction inspections.

FIGHTING FRAUD—RESOURCES TO BE AWARE OF DURING TAX SEASON

Each tax season, we hear from constituents concerned about scams that try to take advantage of people. Be on the alert for scams that ask you to provide any personal identifying information such as your address, your social security number, or any bank information. The I.R.S. **does not ever** call you so if you receive a call from someone posing as an IRS agent or a "fraud investigator" contact your local police department to report the incident. There are also County resources that you may utilize to assist you if you believe you are a victim of fraud.

- Cuyahoga County has an advisory on unemployment insurance fraud here: <https://consumeraffairs.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/unemployment-insurance-fraud.aspx> Many of our residents are receiving letters indicating someone is using their name and/or information in an attempt to fraudulently collect benefits.
- Cuyahoga County also has information on Covid-19 scams. Recognizing that scammers - and on-ly scammers - use these payment methods could keep many of you from losing money to fraud: <https://consumeraffairs.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Covid-19-Scams.aspx>
- Ohioans can report scams to Consumer Affairs through our website: consumeraffairs.cuyahogacounty.us , or by calling the Scam Squad line at 216-443-SCAM (7226).

Cuyahoga County also has great resources regarding dealing with rob calls, and other scams: [SCAMS page](#).

COVID-19 Vaccine Resources for Cuyahoga County

- **Link for residents to register for the vaccine in Cuyahoga County Board of Health for Phases 1A & 1B:** <https://www.ccbh.net/vax/>. Those groups are able to submit their contact information online.
- **Vaccine links:** www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine (a list of documents and graphics are available)
- **Myth vs. Facts:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program/19-vaccine-myths-vs-facts/covid-19-vaccine-myths-vs-facts>
- **FAQ:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/resources/general-resources/frequently-asked-questions+covid-19-vaccine>
- **Vaccine Data:** <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/dashboards/vaccination-dashboard/covid-19-vaccination-dashboard>

House District 15 Utility Resources

First Energy: [The Illuminating Company \(firstenergycorp.com\)](http://The Illuminating Company (firstenergycorp.com))

The link above provides a great deal of information about various support programs, payment plans and other resources. While the site contains helpful information customers may always call our customer care department at **1-800-589-3101**.

Cleveland Power Company: <https://www.cpp.org/Payment-Options>

If you are worried about your bill, received a disconnection notice, your electricity has been disconnected, or need to set up a payment plan call the Customer Care Representative to help you.

Payment Assistance- (216)-664-2782,

You can make payments by mail, phone, online, or in person.

If you are paying online and your balance is over 30 days old, contact the Call Center at 216-664-4600 and report your payment to prevent disconnection of service.

Dominion Energy: <https://www.dominionenergy.com/ohio/billing>

Higher energy bills can be common in the winter, but Dominion Energy gives you payment options to make sure an unexpected bill doesn't put a chill on your winter season. The link above guides your through options for payment plans for your bills.

Dominion can also help with your questions at **800-362-7557**

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland

For legal help, call (216) 687-1900
<https://laslev.org>

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland Tenant Information Line

216-861-5955
<https://laslev.org/02052018/>

Housing Center, Housing Research and Advocacy Center Cleveland

216-361-9240
<http://www.thehousingcenter.org/>

Heights Community Congress Cleveland Heights

216-321-6775
<http://www.heightscongress.org/>