


A legislative update from
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From the desk of Rep. Kelly

Dear Neighbor,

The year is already half over, but we are not slowing down in the legislature. The Ohio House Democrats are bringing the Statehouse to neighborhoods across Ohio! Our Working Families First Tour will connect us so that we can share what we're doing to put more money in your pocket and to protect your fundamental freedoms— like making health care decisions. You'll also have the opportunity to ask questions and offer input on other issues facing our community.

I believe that wherever you come from and whatever your background, everyone should have the opportunity to raise happy, healthy families. That's why I want to share how my work on a comprehensive Families First Agenda will improve our quality of life in the Buckeye State. By including actions to protect and expand access to reproductive healthcare, reduce everyday costs for families, and invest in our children— I am putting families at the center of my priorities.

These town hall events are free and open to the public. I will be hosting a town hall event on **Wednesday, September 21st, 2022 at 7pm at the Forest Park Senior Center** (11555 Winton Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45240). I encourage you to come and bring your own view on our community's needs.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,

State Rep. Brigid Kelly

National Black Business Month

August is National Black Business Month, a time to bring attention to the needs of Black-owned businesses across the country.

Did you know Ohio is ranked the 7th best state for Black entrepreneurship? We have more than 4,200 Black-owned businesses that employ nearly 70,000 people and pay about \$1.5 billion in annual payroll! I encourage you to support your local Black-owned businesses, not just this month, but at any chance you get!

Women's Equality Day

On August 26, we celebrate Women's Equality Day! This day commemorates the 1920 adoption of the 19th Amendment, which prohibits the states and federal government from denying the right to vote to U.S. citizens on the basis of sex. This gave women across America the right to vote.

While we celebrate that the 19th Amendment was a critical step towards gaining equal voting rights, we must also acknowledge that equality on paper is not the same as equality in practice. Black women would continue to struggle and fight to receive the same equalities at the voting polls as white women for another 40 years until the 1965 Voting Rights Act was passed.

Today, there are still issues such as economic adversity and gerrymandering that prevent minority communities from voting and being properly represented in their states. At the Ohio House, my Democratic colleagues and I will continue to fight against these barriers until we ensure everyone has the same opportunities to make their voice heard.



Democrats introduce an executive action plan to reduce gun violence

Ohio House Democrats have tirelessly been working to reduce gun violence here in our own state. That's why I am especially pleased that the Biden Administration has introduced an executive action plan to reduce gun violence across the country. This action plan includes several measures to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, reduce community violence, and assist local law enforcement.

This comprehensive strategy is bolstered by the recent passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most significant gun violence reduction legislation to pass Congress in 30 years.

In the Ohio House, we are fighting for basic, commonsense gun safety bills including:

- HB 38 (West, Miller, A.) [Repeal "Stand Your Ground"](#);
- HB 259 (Robinson, Miller, A.) [Universal background checks](#);
- HB 274 (Upchurch, Jarrells) [Restore local control to regulate firearms-related conduct](#);

- HB 257 (Russo, Smith, M.) [Enact Extreme Risk Protection Order Act \("Red Flag" law\)](#);
- HB 262 (Miranda, Kelly) [Prohibit negligent firearm storage](#);
- HB 360 (Miranda, Smith) [Designate Gun Violence Awareness Month](#);
- HB 661 (Crossman, Hicks-Hudson) [Require gun trigger locks with firearm sales](#);
- HB 700 (Sobecki, Smith, M.) [Revise allocation of firearms related tax revenue to survivors of gun violence, mental health services, and police-community relations](#)

Meanwhile, Ohio Republicans continue to push legislation such as permit-less concealed carry, repealing duty to notify law enforcement, and kill at will. These extreme bills put our law enforcement and communities in danger.

Everyone deserves to feel safe in their homes and in their communities. Gun violence is a public health issue, and it deserves our attention and action. We owe it to Ohio's children and families who deserve to go to school, the grocery store, and anywhere in public without fearing for their lives.



Rep. Kelly introduces legislation to support pregnant workers

Rep. Kelly recently introduced [HB 707](#), legislation to "Enact the Pregnancy Accommodation Act." This bill would require employers to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant workers, and would make it unlawful for employers to fail to refuse to make these accommodations. It further protects pregnant workers by prohibiting an employer from forcing an employee to take leave instead of providing an accommodation and from retaliating against a pregnant employee.

According to supporters like [A Better Balance](#), this legislation will not only provide support and protections for pregnant workers, but will also boost Ohio's economy and support businesses by providing much needed clarification to employers regarding their responsibilities to pregnant employees. This will help prevent possible issues by encouraging informal, open resolutions between employers and employees - allowing employers to better avoid costly litigation. Additionally, this bill will help businesses to increase worker retention rates, thus reducing costs associated with staff turnover. By ensuring that pregnant employees have the resources they need, businesses will also experience a reduction in healthcare costs.

No pregnant individual should have to choose between their health and wellbeing and the health and wellbeing of their pregnancy, and their employment. This bill encourages a conversation between a pregnant employee and their employer about best next steps and ensures the safety of pregnant employees while also providing clarity for employers. [30 other states, including Kentucky](#), have already set better, clearer expectations around pregnancy accommodations. According to Rep. Kelly, it's time that Ohio join the list of states better protecting pregnant employees.

Rep. Kelly Press Releases:

July 12, 2022: [Rep. Kelly announces over \\$813 million to support low-income housing development, improve Ohio infrastructure](#)

July 14, 2022: [Reps. Kelly and Upchurch announce bill to provide support for pregnant employees](#)

August, 4, 2022: [Rep. Kelly announces over \\$129 million to begin planning infrastructure improvement, support state's COVID response](#)