

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE Tracy Richardson

## INTRODUCTION

Dear Neighbor,

It's been an exciting and productive start to the 134th General Assembly! It is truly a privilege to serve you for a second term as state representative. Since taking the oath of office, I've had the opportunity to meet with many individuals and groups throughout our community and discuss how we can keep moving Ohio forward. I'm excited to share that Speaker Bob Cupp has appointed me to the following committees:

- **Chairwoman - Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education**
- **Armed Services and Veterans Affairs**
- **Finance**
- **Primary and Secondary Education**
- **Technology and Innovation**
- **Human Trafficking Initiative**

It is my goal to provide updates on current issues and pending legislation at the Ohio Statehouse. I look forward to continuing to serve you and to making sure that your voice is heard in Columbus!

*-Tracy Richardson*



## MY LEGISLATION

### **HOUSE BILL 26: Remembering Our Local Heroes**

In 1973, Deputy Sheriff William "Bill" Bender was killed along Route 309 in Marion while en route to set up a road block as a result of an escape from a nearby jail. Just 9 years later, his son Trooper William "Randy" Bender died after being struck by a tractor trailer while directing traffic at a construction site. This legislation designates a portion of State Route 309 in Marion County as the "Deputy Sheriff Bill Bender and Trooper Randy Bender Memorial Highway." The naming will recognize the sacrifice of these officers as they served our communities and the unique pain their family has endured.

PASSED HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

### **HOUSE BILL 120: Caring for Loved Ones in Long-Term Care Facilities**

I've heard from many constituents who are distraught because they cannot see their loved ones in long-term care facilities. H.B. 120, the Compassionate Caregivers Act, allows family members access to their loved ones in long-term care facilities in compassionate care situations. The purpose of this bill is to ensure compassionate and life-giving interaction between residents of long-term care facilities and their loved ones.

PASSED OHIO HOUSE

### **HOUSE BILL 170: Providing Relief to Ohio's Schools**

Ohio's students, teachers, and parents have all faced significant hurdles during the course of the pandemic. This bill provides over \$1 billion in federal relief, including over \$850 million in additional federal funding for Ohio's public, private, and vocational schools for COVID-19 pandemic-related expenses. We owe it to our children's future and to the next generation to provide some relief and stability to Ohio's classrooms.

PASSED OHIO HOUSE

# VALUES AND PRIORITIES

I'm honored to champion issues and initiatives that positively impact our everyday lives and strengthen our communities. I'm excited to share that the Ohio House recently passed a fiscally responsible budget that thoughtfully invests in essential public services while implementing policies that cut taxes, expand educational opportunities, support public safety, and boost our economy.

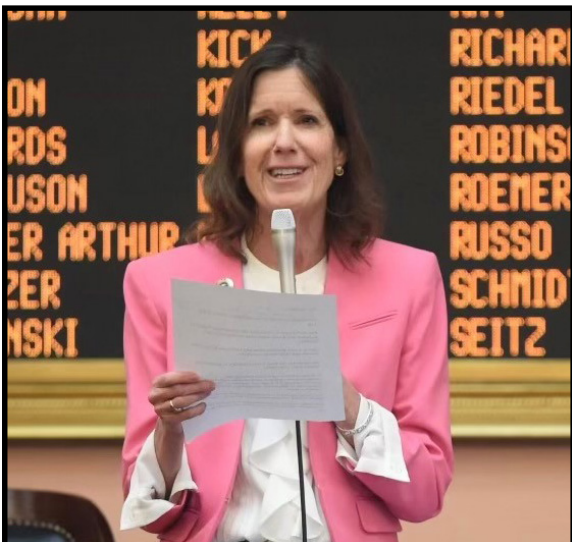
As Chair of the Finance Subcommittee on Primary and Secondary Education, I was grateful to work with educators, school funding experts and child advocates to find solutions and make improvements to Ohio's current school funding formula. In this role, I also led committee policy discussions regarding the state operating budget. I'm proud that we were able to deliver on our commitment to Ohio's children and ensure that schools are funded fairly.

Additionally, I'm thrilled to share other key highlights that I advocated for in the state budget:

- **Tax Cuts:** Provides a two percent across the board personal income tax cut, which will reduce taxes and withholding amounts by approximately \$380 million over the biennium.
- **Law Enforcement, Firefighters and Public Safety:** Supports those who protect and serve our communities every day, including a \$15 million police training initiative, \$10 million for body cameras, and grant initiatives to aid fire departments with equipment.
- **Jobs and Our Economy:** Includes targeted investments to support job retention and creation, workforce training, and economic development efforts. It expands state support for Ohio companies looking to do business with state government.
- **Broadband:** Creates the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant Program and the Ohio Broadband Expansion Program Authority, and includes more than \$200 million to support grants under the initiative.
- **COVID-19 Relief Grants:** Appropriates \$155 million for federal grants to support bars and restaurants, the lodging industry, entertainment venues, and new businesses negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS):** Appropriates \$3 million to offset the fee to participate in the MARCS program to support local law enforcement and first responders.
- **Ohio National Guard Scholarship Expansion:** Establishes eligibility for the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program for an individual actively enrolled in at least three credit hours in a credential-certifying program, licensing program, trade certification program, or apprenticeship program for an in-demand trade.
- **Gifted Students:** Ensures that funds dedicated to gifted students are spent specifically for those purposes and requires study and recommendations for gifted initiatives for economically disadvantaged, minority, and rural students.
- **Ohio Arts Council:** Provides \$2 million of increased funding to strengthen investment in the arts.

It remains my priority to protect individual freedoms in regard to COVID-19. There have been a number of bills introduced at the state level that address masks and vaccine passports. I am closely monitoring these efforts as they go through the committee process, with a goal of creating meaningful and effective policy for Ohioans. The COVID-19 vaccine should be a personal health decision, not a government mandate. I will continue to support legislation that provides checks and balances to ensure that you have a voice in the decision making process. Finally, I've enjoyed celebrating the success of individuals in our community through commendations honoring business anniversaries, birthdays, sports teams, and other notable achievements. We are so blessed to live in Marion and Union counties!

## SERVING YOU



As I continue my work in the state legislature, please don't hesitate to contact my office if you need assistance with a state issue or would like to share your thoughts with me. I also encourage you to follow my social media for updates on what's happening in Columbus and our community.



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I believe the future for Ohio is bright. I remain committed to finding solutions to the challenges we face today in order to make our state a better place to live, work, and raise a family. I hope you have a safe and wonderful spring season!

*Lacey M. Richardson*