

JANUARY 2022

# Representative Sharon A. Ray Statehouse Updates

Keeping you Informed on Progress Made in Columbus



## LETTER FROM REPRESENTATIVE SHARON A. RAY

### Representing the People of Medina County

To My Constituents,

It has been an honor to serve as your state representative this past year. It is with great pleasure that I write to provide you with an update on the legislative accomplishments we made in Columbus in 2021. Our office and the General Assembly at large were able to work effectively to make significant policy changes that will bring great improvements to Medina County and the State of Ohio.

Always know that I am here as a resource for you. I am here to help. Should you need any assistance from our office, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Sharon A. Ray  
House District 69

## Resources:

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE  
COMMISSION

**Vist their website  
here!**

OHIO CHANNEL

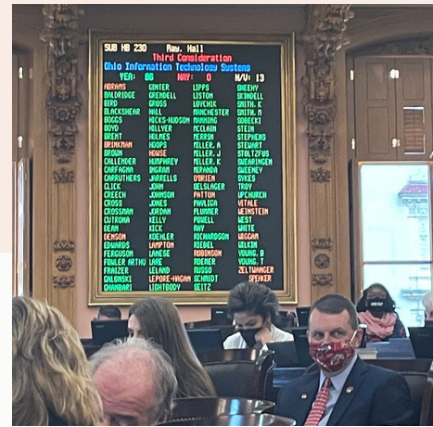
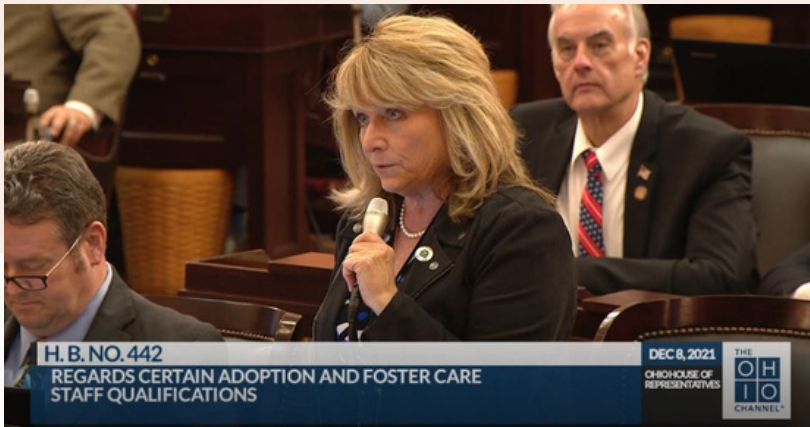
**Keep up to date with  
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Committee Hearings  
here!**

CONTACT OUR  
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## 2021 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SUCCESSFULLY PASSING LEGISLATION

This past year was very productive as we were able to effectively pass multiple priority bills on the House Floor.

### House Bill 230: Modernizing Ohio's Tech Infrastructure and Increasing Efficiency

I am happy to announce that my bill to modernize Ohio's information technology infrastructure passed the House floor with unanimous support. House Bill 230 will require the state of Ohio to modernize, centralize, and enhance its IT Systems. Our systems are in desperate need of reform. We must provide our agencies with the capability to operate at the most effective and efficient pace possible to get our constituents the help they need and provide protection from fraud. Thanks to the support of my Colleagues, House Bill 230 is one step closer to making critical improvements to our state's internal operations.

### House Bill 442: Addressing Staffing Shortages for Foster and Family Care Agencies

House Bill 442 passed the House Floor in December with significant bipartisan support. I introduced this bill with my Joint sponsor, Representative Jason Stephens, to eliminate unneeded regulatory barriers to employment and expand the pool of qualified individuals eligible to serve as home assessors. Current law mandates many unnecessary educational and licensing requirements for individuals to perform home assessments. This creates a significant strain on staffing and inhibits an agency's ability to adequately protect children and families. Our bill will effectively alleviate this burden by expanding the pool of qualified individuals to anyone holding a bachelor's degree in the human services field and creates parity with our public agencies.

### House Bill 352: Protecting Against Discrimination

In an additional effort to support our foster families, I introduced and worked to pass House Bill 352. The bill prohibits disability from being used to deny parenting rights for individuals who are proven to be loving and capable parents. Unfortunately, we are seeing numerous instances where individuals with a desire to foster or adopt a child are being denied that opportunity based solely on their disability.

A person's disability does not limit their ability to be a responsible, productive, and engaging parent. The practice of discrimination against individuals with disabilities is wrong. Sadly, these discriminatory practices not only affect the parents but deny many vulnerable children the chance to land in a safe and loving home. We need to bring an end to this injustice. I look forward to continuing to work on this bill as it receives consideration in the Senate and making the push to get this legislation to the Governor's desk for a signature.

# PROTECTING MEDINA COUNTY'S MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS

Another accomplishment to highlight for 2021 was our work to secure \$100,000 in funding for Medina County to initiate the development and construction of a Homeless Shelter. This appropriated funding passed through the Senate and was signed by Governor Mike DeWine in June. These dollars provide a great first step for the County to kickstart this project by opening new opportunities for local officials to obtain additional funding to build a brick and mortar site. This is a critical development for our community. Medina is the largest county in the state without a homeless shelter and the need for this facility is well documented. I look forward to working with our fellow state, local, and federal officials, as well as leaders in the non-profit sector, to implement a permanent solution to the issue of homelessness in our county.

## Passing a Historic Budget

Thanks to the diligent work of my fellow colleagues and House leadership, The Ohio House was able to make historic reforms that will have a direct positive impact on Medina County's schools, families, and small businesses. Here are some of the most notable achievements:

**School Funding:** includes a proposal for major school funding reform initiative – the Fair School Funding Plan – that is the result of more than three years of work by educators and policymakers. The proposed formula is predictable, sustainable, and transparent. Most of all, it is fair to all of Ohio's public schools.

**Tax Relief for Ohio Families:** implements a 2 percent across the board personal income tax cut, which will reduce taxes and withholding amounts by approximately \$380 million over the biennium.

**Covid Relief for Ohio Businesses:** provides COVID-19 relief aid to help businesses impacted by the pandemic. The House budget proposal appropriates \$155 million in COVID-19 relief aid to help businesses impacted by the pandemic. Grants from this funding will be available in the fiscal year beginning July 1. The package includes:

- o\$100 million for restaurants and bars
- o\$25 million for the lodging industry
- o\$20 million for indoor and outdoor entertainment venues
- o\$10 million in relief for new businesses

**Support for our First Responders:** creates provisions supporting law enforcement, firefighters, and public safety. Some of the initiatives include security grants, school safety grants, body cameras, law enforcement training investment, firefighter grants, and funding for the Ohio Cyber Reserve.



## CAPITAL BUDGET FUNDING: A MESSAGE TO DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS

I would like to provide an important update to anyone interested in applying for state dollars in this year's capital budget. **The deadline to apply for capital budget appropriations has been extended to Tuesday, March 11, 2022.**

Capital budget appropriations are specifically targeted at supporting cultural, historical, infrastructural, economic development, natural resources, and other capital projects in local communities across the state of Ohio. If you have a project you wish to submit for consideration, please contact my office at (614) 466-8140 or Rep69@ohiohouse.gov as soon as possible.

To be eligible for consideration of funding the capital appropriations bill, the Office of Budget and Management recommends submitting the following project information to members of the General Assembly:

- Project name and a brief description of the scope of the project;
- Entity or organization sponsoring the project;
- Specific description for what the state capital dollars will be used;
- Who will own the facility or asset during construction and once work is completed;
- The physical location of the project (city and county);
- Estimated total project cost;
- Amount of state funding being requested;
- Amount of non-state funding, including private or non-state public funds supporting the project;

Whether the project will result in a useful asset or will require future funding, what state funding the project or asset has received in the past, and whether the project will be requesting additional state funding in the future;

- Explanation of a plan for support of ongoing operational costs;
- Any additional relevant information you believe would be of assistance in evaluating the project's value and eligibility to receive state funding.

I look forward to working with you to identify any projects that can build our community and make a major impact on Medina County.