



Representative Timothy J. DeGeeter
15th House District

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House Democrats Commend Governor's Optimistic Vision
Economic Challenges Will Not Derail Work Toward Progress

COLUMBUS – State Representative Timothy DeGeeter (D-Parma) today applauded Governor Ted Strickland's optimistic vision of Ohio's future, presented in a "State of the State" address that unveiled new programs and new ideas to aid Ohio's economy, education system and veterans.

"Even in the face of our tough economic times nationally and statewide, Governor Strickland found opportunity for the state," Rep. DeGeeter said. "He continues to advocate for real change today that will move Ohio forward."

Rep. DeGeeter noted the Governor's \$1.7 billion *Building Ohio Jobs* package as a rational way to stimulate growth in the employment base and expand Ohio's economic opportunity. The bond package investments include:

- \$250 million for advanced and renewable energy
- \$150 million for intermodal infrastructure, including roads, rail and ports
- \$100 million for bio-products that use agricultural byproducts to create plastic and polymer goods
- \$200 million for the biomedical industry
- \$200 million for the Ohio Main Streets Renewal Initiative
- \$400 million in the Clean Ohio fund to revitalize brownfields
- \$400 million in the Ohio Public Works Commission to help with road, bridge, water and sewer projects

Ultimately, the package, if approved by voters, may create up to 80,000 jobs.

"This package clarifies our priorities without exceeding our debt limit," Rep. DeGeeter said. "It targets some of our greatest economic needs."

"The most important aspect, however, is the potential to create thousands of jobs. The plan's bottom line is the innovation and creativity that will be fostered in Ohio with the help of the Governor's program."

Rep. DeGeeter also expressed support for the Governor's "Senior-to-Sophomore" program, which gives high-achieving high school students more options to attend college courses *for free* during their senior years in high school so that they can enter college with enough credit to have sophomore standing.

"This statewide initiative is similar to the successful collaboration agreement we have seen with Parma Schools and Cuyahoga Community College that benefit many high school students," Rep. DeGeeter said. "As an individual who paid for his own college and law school education and is still currently making student loan payments, I personally know how expensive it is to receive a college education. This program will assist many more Ohioans in obtaining a college degree."

Governor Strickland also focused on primary and secondary education, proposing to create a Cabinet-level Director of Education and to present ideas to address the state's school funding situation to the people of Ohio in 2009.

"Governor Strickland is trying to find solutions he discussed in reforming our school funding system. I am assured our efforts at working together towards this goal will pay off."

Regarding the proposal to create the Ohio Department of Veterans Affairs, Rep. DeGeeter called it "a long-overdue move to honor our veterans and their families."

"The Governor vowed to 'create opportunities for today, tomorrow and for generations.' I believe this address and these ideas will pave the way for a more prosperous tomorrow for all Ohioans."