

Ohio Letter to the Citizens of Ohio

Dear fellow Ohioans,

As we go about our lives, we are affected every day by the laws of this state. Although the vast majority of Ohioans know that the Ohio Constitution is our state's highest-governing document, a smaller number of people have actually read its wording. It covers everything from education and local government to gambling and finances—and in many cases, it does so with very specific language.

In a state as diverse and ever-changing as Ohio, how do we ensure that the Ohio Constitution continues to accurately reflect the people of our great state?

The Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission (OCMC) was created with the goal of making needed improvements to our state constitution. The commission is comprised of both lawmakers and public members including educators, business leaders, local government officials and others. Our job is to take an in-depth look at the Ohio Constitution through a modern-day framework, starting a conversation on the problems associated with it and forming suggestions of desired changes.

Ultimately, our recommendations will go to the Ohio General Assembly, which can then place issues on the ballot for the people of Ohio to vote for or against. This makes public input an essential part of ensuring that the commission's recommendations will be reflective of people like you. Not only can you cast your ballot when it is all said and done; you can have a say as the process moves along—whether through general correspondence with the commission or attending one of the many public hearings that we plan to have throughout the state.

In the coming months and years, you will be hearing much more from OCMC and its members because we want to make sure you stay as informed on our progress as possible. You can also find regular updates at ocmc.ohio.gov.

The constitutional changes that might be enacted through the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission could have a very significant impact on the future of this state. Our hope is that you will join us in this very careful and deliberative process—one that we carry out because of our shared interest in seeing Ohio prosper.

Sincerely,

Vernon Sykes, Co-Chair
Representative, 34th House District

William G. Batchelder, Co-Chair
Speaker, 69th House District

Guide to Providing Input to the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission

You may make recommendations for revisions to the Ohio Constitution through the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission web site. Visit ocmc.ohio.gov and click on "Submit Your Ideas."

The Commission has six subject-matter committees that are reviewing all sections of the Ohio Constitution. If you have a recommendation on a particular subject-matter, please contact the appropriate Committee chair listed below.

Bill of Rights and Voting Committee

Topics: Article 1 (Sections on the Rights of All - Sections: 1-4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 16-19, 19b, 20, and 21), Article V (Elective Franchise), Article XVII (Elections), Voting rights
Contact: Richard Saphire, Chair (richard.saphire@ocmc.ohio.gov)

Legislative Branch and Executive Branch Committee

Topics: Article II (Legislative), Article III (Executive), Article XI (Reapportionment), Article XIV (Livestock Standards Care Review Board), Article IX (Militia), Term limits, Redistricting/reappointment, Global and interstate/regional economic development
Contact: Fred Mills, Chair (fred.mills@ocmc.ohio.gov)

Constitutional Revisions and Updating Committee

Topics: Article II, Section 1 (Legislative initiative/referendum), Article XVI (Amendments), Initiative, Referendum
Contact: Dennis Mulvihill, Chair (dennis.mulvihill@ocmc.ohio.gov)

Finance, Taxation, and Economic Development Committee

Topics: Article VIII (Public Debt and Public Works), Article XII (Finance and Taxation) Article XIII (Corporations), Tax reform, Statewide intrastate economic development
Contact: Douglas Cole, Chair (douglas.cole@ocmc.ohio.gov)

Education, Public Institutions, Miscellaneous, and Local Government Committee

Topics: Article VI (Education), Article VII (Public Institutions), Article XV (Miscellaneous), School funding, Article X (Country and Township Organization), Article XVIII (Municipal Corporations), Home rule, Adjoining regionalization and economic development
Contact: Chad Readler, Chair (chad.readler@ocmc.ohio.gov)

Judicial Branch and the Administration of Justice Committee

Topics: Article IV (Judicial), Article I Sections on the Rights under Justice - Sections: 5, 8-10a, 12, 14, 15, and 19a), Judicial organization, Criminal and Civil justice system, Rights of criminally accused
Contact: Janey Abaray, Chair (janet.abaray@ocmc.ohio.gov)