

*The Ohio Senate*

Tom Niehaus, President  
Eric Kearney, Minority Leader



*The Ohio House of  
Representatives*

William G. Batchelder, Speaker  
Armond Budish, Minority Leader

**OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERNIZATION COMMISSION**

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**MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Janet Gilligan Abaray** (Cincinnati, Ohio)

Janet Abaray is an attorney from Cincinnati practicing in the area of complex civil litigation. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa and summa cum laude from the University of Cincinnati McMicken College of Arts and Science in 1979, with high departmental honors in English literature. She graduated Order of the Coif from the University of Cincinnati College of Law in 1982, where she also served as Business Manager of the Law Review. A member of the Ohio Bar since 1982, Ms. Abaray has focused her practice on complex civil litigation, with a particular emphasis on pharmaceutical mass tort. She has served as national lead or liaison counsel in numerous multidistrict litigations involving medical products, has been appointed lead counsel in class actions involving contract disputes, and has acted as trial counsel in major class action and pharmaceutical litigations. Ms. Abaray has argued before the Ohio Supreme Court concerning the constitutionality of tort reform, and has litigated significant issues concerning employment law, federal preemption, admissibility of expert testimony, arbitration clauses and class action certification. She practices in Cincinnati, where she is the managing shareholder of the Ohio office of Burg Simpson Eldredge Hersh Jardine, P.C.

**Representative Ron Amstutz** (Wooster, Ohio)

State Representative Ron Amstutz represents Wayne County in the Ohio House of Representatives. He serves as Chairman of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee. From 2001 through 2008, Ron served in the Ohio Senate, where his primary appointment was Chairman of Ways and Means and Economic Development. Prior to his service in the Senate, Ron served 20 years in the Ohio House of Representatives. His experience includes numerous leadership and committee assignments, such as Assistant Majority Whip and Chairman of the Education Section of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee. Ron's political career kicked off in 1976 when he was elected Mayor of the City of Orrville. Ron held the position through 1980, when he ran successfully for the Ohio House of Representatives. Ron is active in local civic and volunteer organizations. He is the past president and chairman of the board for the Orrville Jaycees. He also served as an elected member of the Orrville City Charter Commission. Ron is a long-standing member of the board of the Orrville Area Boys' and Girls Club and is a member of Wooster Rotary Club. He is a member of the Wayne County Republican Party, sitting on its Executive Committee. Ron is a graduate of Central Christian High School and holds a B.A. degree in Government Communications from Capital University.

**Herb Asher** (Columbus, Ohio)

Dr. Herb Asher is professor emeritus of political science at The Ohio State University, counselor to the university president, and Senior Vice President for Government Affairs. He previously served as special assistant to the university president for government relations and founding director of the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy. He is frequently called upon as an expert political analyst by local and national media. Dr. Asher earned his degrees at Bucknell University (B.S. Mathematics) and the University of Michigan (M.A. and Ph. D. in political science). Dr. Asher has authored numerous books and articles, his most recent book being: Polling and the Public: What Every Citizen Should Know, 8th edition, 2011. Dr. Asher serves as faculty adviser to several student organizations, including the Undergraduate Student Government, the College Democrats, and two fraternities. He also serves on the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees of Hillel and formerly served as faculty adviser to the College Republicans. Dr. Asher is a former member and chair of the Ohio Ethics Commission and a Member of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. He is a former member of the Board of Trustees of Community Research Partners, a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Columbus Metropolitan Club, and former president of the Ohio State University Faculty Club.

**Speaker William G. Batchelder, Co-Chair** (Medina, Ohio)

Speaker of the Ohio House William G. Batchelder returned to the Ohio House of Representatives in 2007, having previously served in the Ohio House for 30 years. He currently is serving his third consecutive term and was elected by his colleagues to serve as House Speaker during the 129<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Speaker Batchelder graduated from Medina High School in 1960. He later received a bachelor's degree from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1964, as well as a Juris Doctorate from The Ohio State University College of Law in 1967. Speaker Batchelder has established a long career in practicing and teaching law. He spent 31 years of his professional career at the Williams and Batchelder Law Firm in Medina, Ohio, while serving as an adjunct professor of law at the University of Akron Law School and as an adjunct professor at Cleveland State University Levin College of Urban Affairs. Additionally, Representative Batchelder has served as a judge for the Medina County Common Pleas Court, a judge on the Ninth District Court of Appeals from 1999 to 2005, and as a presiding judge on the same court of appeals from 2000 to 2001. During his tenure at the Ohio House, Speaker Batchelder has been recognized numerous times with the Watchdog of the Treasury Award. He also received the 4-H Meritorious Service Award and the Friends of 4-H award. The Ohio State Volunteer Firefighters Association recognized his service to Ohio Firefighters throughout his career. For outstanding contributions to the wise use and management of the nation's natural resources, Speaker Batchelder received the Conservation Legislators Award from the League of Ohio Sportsmen and the National Wildlife Federation. Speaker Batchelder is a member of the Ohio Farm Bureau, Medina County Township Association and the Grange. He is also a Lifetime Member of Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion and Amvets. Representative Batchelder currently serves as a member of the Board of Governors of the Masonic Learning Center for Children, an organization that treats children with dyslexia. He is also an active participant in the Scanlon Inn of Court. Speaker Batchelder represents the 69<sup>th</sup> House District, which includes portions of

Medina County. He currently resides in Medina with his wife, Alice. They have two children and four grandchildren.

**Roger L. Beckett** (Ashland, Ohio)

Roger L. Beckett is Deputy Director of the Ashbrook Center at Ashland University, where he has worked for the past 15 years to develop programs for teachers and students across America about constitutional self-government. Among other activities, Roger was appointed to the Ohio Humanities Council by the Governor in 2007 and was a part of the 179th Airlift Wing Committee, a Mansfield, Ohio community committee that successfully saved the base from closing during the Pentagon's Base Realignment and Closing process in 2004. He received his undergraduate degree from Ashland University and Master of Arts from The Ohio State University. He is currently co-editing a new edition of *Madison's Debates in the Constitutional Convention of 1787*.

**Karla L. Bell** (Shaker Heights, Ohio)

Karla Bell graduated cum laude, with Honors in Social Studies from Wesleyan University in Connecticut; she received her law degree from University of Chicago Law School. After 13 years of private practice, first as an associate at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in Los Angeles, and then as a partner at McKittrick, Jackson, DeMarco & Peckenpaugh in Newport Beach, Ms. Bell retired from practice and began an active volunteer career, serving as one of the founding members of Pro-Choice Orange County, a bi-partisan PAC. She also taught constitutional law, first at Chapman University in Orange, Ca., and then at Cleveland State University. For seven years Ms. Bell was a professor at Case Western University School of law, where she headed the Appellate Practice program, which focused on constitutional law, and effective written and oral advocacy. Ms. Bell has been a regular speaker at Continuing Legal Education seminars hosted by the Northeast Chapter of the American Constitution Society. She is presently working in the chambers of Judge David Dowd, a federal judge who sits in the Northern District of Ohio. Ms. Bell is also the mother/step-mother of 5 children.

**Paula Brooks** (Upper Arlington, Ohio)

Franklin County Commissioner Paula Brooks, a ninth-generation Ohioan and attorney, is a recognized leader for securing her county's fiscal sustainability, balanced with her prioritization on preparing children for a global job market, expanding access to quality health care, preserving natural resources, and creating a business climate for greater economic opportunity. Her leadership roles include: 2010 President and current Board Member of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio, and past president of the Ohio State Bar Foundation. Her distinguished legal career includes: Special Assistant to the Ohio Attorney General, an antitrust and charitable fraud investigator, Director of the Ohio Attorney General's Women's Law Project, Chief Counsel for the Ohio Department of Liquor Control, Assistant Director of the Department of Administrative Services, and partner in a private law practice. The Ohio State Bar Association tapped Ms. Brooks as its representative on the former Open Government Task Force. In 2000, the U.S. Secretary of Defense appointed her as a 3-star civilian advisor on the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services. Prior to her election in 2004 to the

Franklin County Board of Commissioners, Ms. Brooks was Vice Mayor and Council Member in Upper Arlington. Now in her 8th year as Franklin County Commissioner - and third term as Board President - Ms. Brooks' commitment to prudent financial planning has allowed Franklin County to maintain its double AAA bond rating - the best credit rating for any Ohio county. Commissioner Brooks also currently leads a national task force on International Economic Development for the National Association of Counties and is its Vice Chair of the Public/Private Green Government Advisory Board.

### **Senator Capri Cafaro (Hubbard, Ohio)**

Capri S. Cafaro has represented the 32nd Ohio Senate District since January 2007 when she was appointed to the 127th General Assembly. Cafaro's district encompasses Ashtabula and Trumbull counties, located in Northeast Ohio. As of 2013, portions of Geauga County have been added to her district as well. Cafaro, 34, graduated from Stanford University with a BA in American Studies and from Georgetown University with a MALS in International Studies. She has a long standing interest in public policy pertaining to health care and the needs of older adults. She was a State Advocate Representative for the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare and served as a councilor for the Medicare Rights Center. In addition, she previously served on the Trumbull County Senior Services Advisory Council and was a State Policy Liaison for Ohio with the National Patient Advocate Foundation. Senator Cafaro has also acted as an Economic Policy Associate for Global Action on Aging, an NGO with consultative status at the United Nations. Additionally, as a participant in the Clinton Global Initiative, she developed a project on Anti-Corruption efforts in emerging democracies. One year after her appointment, Cafaro secured a leadership position as Assistant Minority Whip for the Senate Democrats. Her hard work and dedication was quickly acknowledged by her peers and in January 2009 she was sworn in as Senate Minority Leader. She served as the Minority Leader until January of 2012, making her the longest serving Senate Minority Leader since the late 1990's. During her tenure as Leader, Senate Democrats passed more bills than under any other leadership in the last decade. Senator Cafaro currently serves as the Ranking Member on the Senate Standing Committees on Health, Human Services, and Aging and Highways and Transportation. She serves on the Insurance, Commerce and Labor Committee, as well as the Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Committee, the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee, and the Legislative Service Commission. She has been appointed to and currently serves on the Health Care Coverage and Quality Council, the Joint Committee on Gaming and Wagering, the Ohio Advisory Council for Aging, the Redistricting, Reapportionment and Demographic Research Task Force, and the Unified Long Term Care Services and Supports Group. Senator Cafaro was presented with the 2007-08 Legislator of the Year Award by Ohio Advanced Practice Nurses for her outstanding contributions to the practice and advocacy of health care-related legislation. She was also honored as 2008 Woman of the Year by the Liberty Historical Society. In 2008 she was named a Friend of Agriculture by the Ohio Farm Bureau and awarded the honor of being one of the five MVP's in her "40 under 40" Class, selected and hosted by the Mahoning Valley 20/30 Club. In 2009, Senator Cafaro was recognized as Legislator of the Year by the Ohio Speech and Hearing Coalition, the Ohio Farmer's Union, AMVETS Department of Ohio, and Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers' Association and the Soybean Association for her leadership and support of Ohio's bio products industry and Ohio agriculture. Senator Cafaro was further recognized for her service by Ohio Jewish Communities

in 2009 and 2011. She was nominated a legislator of the year by Ohio's Homecare and Hospice Association in 2010 and 2011. In 2011, Senator Cafaro received the Youth Leadership Award from the National Italian American Foundation in Washington, D.C. Senator Cafaro, on behalf of the Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus, received the Ohio State Lodge Legislator of the Year Award in 2011 from the Fraternal Order of Police. She also received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Ohio Children's Hospital Association in 2011.

### **Representative Kathleen Clyde (Kent, Ohio)**

Kathleen Clyde is the State Representative for the 68th (soon to be 75th) District in Portage County. She serves as a member of the Finance & Appropriations Committee and its Subcommittee on Higher Education, the State Government & Elections Committee and its Subcommittee on Redistricting, the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, and the Redistricting Reform Task Force. Kathleen graduated from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law as a Public Service Fellow with the Dean's Highest Honors. While at OSU, Kathleen was an editor of the law review, president of the Public Interest Law Foundation, and a student researcher and analyst at OSU's Election Law Center. She also served as a law clerk for the Ohio Secretary of State and the Ohio Senate and earned a summer fellowship at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University for the study of election law. After OSU, she became Deputy Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, Armond Budish, where she worked on legal issues ranging from access to the courts to voting rights. Kathleen is currently an associate in the Kent law firm of Williams, Welser, Kratcoski & Can. The firm focuses on family, real estate, and small business law. She is a noted expert in election law and has spoken on election law issues at the Ohio State, Capital University and Harvard Law Schools.

### **Douglas R. Cole (Upper Arlington, Ohio)**

Doug Cole is a named partner at Organ Cole + Stock, a Columbus-based litigation boutique that he formed with two other former Jones Day partners in 2011. Before that, he was a partner at Jones Day's Columbus office where he participated in the firm's appellate and intellectual property practices. He joined Jones Day after serving as Ohio's State Solicitor from 2003 through 2006. As State Solicitor, Doug was Ohio's chief appellate attorney. He has also served as a tenure-track law professor at the Moritz College of Law at the Ohio State University. He started his career as a clerk to the Honorable Frank H. Easterbrook, United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and then became an associate at Kirkland & Ellis, a Chicago-based law firm. Doug has nearly twenty years of litigation experience in complex civil matters. He has argued five cases in the United States Supreme Court and more than twenty cases in the Ohio Supreme Court and federal circuit courts of appeal, and has appeared in state and federal trial courts across the country. He has litigated cases in a wide variety of subject-matter areas including, but not limited to, intellectual property, antitrust law, the First Amendment, statutory interpretation, the dormant Commerce Clause, and various provisions of the Ohio Constitution. Doug frequently speaks and writes on subjects including the U.S. Supreme Court, intellectual property trends, and securities law. Doug is active in the Ohio State Bar Association, having served on the board of editors for the *Ohio State Bar Journal*.

**Jo Ann Davidson** (Reynoldsburg, Ohio)

Jo Ann Davidson currently serves as Chair of the Ohio Casino Control Commission. In addition, she has her own consulting group, JAD and Associates. Davidson had a distinguished career in the Ohio House of Representatives, serving in leadership and eventually becoming Ohio's first woman Speaker of the House (1995-2000). Davidson also served as Minority Leader and was recognized for her expertise on the state budget, economic development, local government and education issues. Davidson's local government public service included ten years as a member of Reynoldsburg City Council and service as Clerk for Truro Township. Davidson also worked as Vice President of Special Programs for the Ohio Chamber of Commerce prior to 1994. She is a member of the Board of Trustees for the University of Findlay and Franklin University and is a former member of The Ohio State University Board of Trustees. She holds honorary degrees from Ohio University, The Ohio State University, Franklin University, Capital University and the University of Findlay.

**Patrick F. Fischer** (Cincinnati, Ohio)

Currently serving as a Judge for the First District Court of Appeals in Hamilton County, Pat Fischer is the first judge to serve as president to the Ohio State Bar Association in 15 years and only the second judge in that position since 1900. In practice for nearly 30 years, he is an honors graduate of Harvard Law School, and prior to being elected a judge, he had been named to Best Lawyers in America®, Top 50 Lawyers in Cincinnati, Top 100 Lawyers in Ohio, and Ohio Super Lawyers. Judge Fischer began his legal career with a clerkship for U.S. District Judge William Bertelsman, and in 1987 he began working for the law firm of Keating Muething & Klekamp in the trial department and became partner four years later. He has always had a deep and abiding interest in ethics and professionalism matters, and presents at seminars each year on those subjects. A past president of the Cincinnati Bar Association, Judge Fischer chaired its Ethics and Professional Responsibility, as well as its Professionalism committees. He also served two terms on the Ohio Supreme Court's Commission on Professionalism, including serving as its vice chair. The late Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Ohio, Thomas Moyer, named then attorney Pat Fischer to co-chair a task force that has made Ohio's judicial system more efficient and just. In his free time, Judge Fischer has been a dedicated public servant who served on numerous local boards including the Hamilton County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board and St. Ursula Villa, was a founding member of the Cincinnati Children's Museum Board, and currently serves on the board of Visions Community Services. Judge Fischer and his wife, Jane, live in Pleasant Ridge, where he served as president of that Community Council. He is an active member of St. Xavier Catholic Church in downtown Cincinnati, where he serves as both a Eucharistic minister and lector.

**Judith L. French** (Grandview Heights, Ohio)

Judge Judi French serves on the Tenth District Court of Appeals, which hears appeals from Franklin County courts and state administrative agencies. She was first elected in 2004 and re-elected in 2010. Prior to joining the bench, Judge French served as chief legal counsel to Governor Taft and as chief counsel and section chief under Attorney General Betty Montgomery. During her time in the attorney general's office, she argued two cases before the United States

Supreme Court, including a landmark case concerning school choice. Judge French began her state service in 1993 as deputy director for legal affairs at the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Prior to that time, she was corporate counsel at Steelcase Inc. in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and an associate at the Columbus law firm of Porter, Wright, Morris & Arthur, where she practiced environmental law. Judge French earned a B.A. in Political Science, an M.A. in History, and a J.D. (with honors), all from The Ohio State University. She currently serves as a member of the Moritz College of Law National Council.

**Edward L. Gilbert** (Akron, Ohio)

Mr. Gilbert graduated from Zanesville High School in Zanesville, Ohio in 1969. He went on to Wooster College in Wooster, Ohio where he studied Theoretical Economics and Speech, played on the varsity football team and served as an officer of the Black Student Union. He earned his degree in 1973 having received the Schwartz Award for general excellence in college work. Mr. Gilbert attended the University of Akron School of Law where he served as President of the Black American Law Students of America, Akron Branch. He earned his Juris Doctorate in 1976. Attorney Gilbert has been a principal in the law firms of Parmes, Purnell, Stubbs & Gilbert; Slater, Zurz & Gilbert and is presently practicing in Akron, Ohio at Edward L. Gilbert Co., L.P.A. His practice focuses on civil rights litigation and constitutional law violations. Since he began practicing law in 1976, Mr. Gilbert has won more than 50 million dollars in verdicts for civil rights and constitutional law violations. Mr. Gilbert is president of The Akron-Canton Barristers Association, a group of approximately 75 African American attorneys in Stark and Summit Counties. He is a member of the Akron Bar Association and the Ohio Bar Association and serves on the NAACP Legal Redress Committee covering five Northeastern Ohio counties.

**Representative Matt Huffman** (Lima, Ohio)

Matt Huffman is a third-term State Representative and practicing attorney from Lima, Ohio. He is currently serving at the Majority Floor leader in the Ohio House of Representatives and is the Speaker Prop-Tempore-elect for the 130<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Representative Huffman graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1982 and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Cincinnati in 1985. Since that time he has been with the law firm of Huffman, Kelley, Brock and Gottschalk, LLC. Since his admittance to the Ohio State Bar Association in 1985, he has practiced law in the areas of personal injury, business litigation, and domestic relations. He is admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio and the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He has argued cases in the Ohio Supreme Court, several appellate and trial courts, and various local and state administrative agencies. As a State Representative, Huffman served as the Chairman of the House State Government and Elections Committee and is currently the Chair of the House Redistricting Sub-committee. He is also a member of the House Judiciary and Ethics and Education committees. Representative Huffman has worked on legislation dealing with elections and government; as well as, education, health and medicine, insurance and judicial issues. He has received multiple awards including the 2012 Elected Official of Year award from the Ohio Association of Elected Officials.

### **Senator Shannon Jones** (Springboro, Ohio)

State Senator Shannon Jones is currently serving her first full term in the Ohio Senate and represents the 7th Senate District, which includes all of Warren County and portions of Hamilton County. Throughout her tenure in the legislature - she previously served as a member of the Ohio House of Representatives from 2007 to 2009. For the 129th General Assembly, Shannon was selected by her colleagues to serve as the Majority Whip. Shannon has prioritized revitalizing the state economy, creating jobs and ensuring the state lives within its means. With a passion for long-term services and supports as well as pediatric healthcare, Shannon utilized opportunities to modernize Medicaid, implement Medicaid cost-containment strategies and improve the overall health system performance. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati, Shannon and her husband of 18 years, Russell, live in Clearcreek Township where they are raising their two children, Jacob (13) and Anna (8).

### **Charles F. Kurfess** (Perrysburg, Ohio)

A graduate of Bowling Green State University and the Ohio State University Moritz School of Law, Charles Kurfess served in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corp in the Far East during the Korean Conflict and operated a general law practice for 33 years in Bowling Green. His long career as a public servant included two terms as a Wood County Common Pleas Judge and 11 terms as a state representative, during three of which he served as Speaker of the House. Kurfess has been active nationally in organizations supporting the work of state legislatures, having been one of the founders of the National Council of State Legislatures and serving on the Governing Board of the Executive Committee of the Council of State Governments. Kurfess serves on several committees and task forces for the Ohio Judicial Conference, the Ohio Supreme Court, and the Ohio State Bar Association. He was awarded Honorary Life Fellowship by the Ohio State Bar Foundation and Distinguished Alumnus Award from Bowling Green State University, and was appointed by Presidents Nixon and Ford to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. Speaker Kurfess is married to former Helyn Rudolph; father to three, grandfather to five, and great-grandfather to one; and a lifelong member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Stony Ridge.

### **Larry L. Macon** (Richfield, Ohio)

Dr. Larry L. Macon has been an Assistant Professor of Religion at Cleveland State University since 1995. He also serves as the Senior Administrator and CEO of Mt. Zion in Oakwood Village, where he administers programs and projects of the religious institution through staffing, lecturing, creating studies in religion, and community outreach programs. He holds a Doctor in Ministry and an M.A. from Ashland University, a Doctor of Divinity from St. Thomas College, and a B.A. from Cleveland State University. He is the author of several recent books and articles. He is a member of the Association for Study of African American Life and History, Presiding Bishop of the Ohio Ecumenical Alliance of International Fellowship, Chairman and Past President of the United Pastors in Mission. He is the recipient of a number of awards, including a Lifetime Award from Angelnet of Greater Cleveland, the Good Shepherd Award from Boy Scouts of American, the NAACP Freedom Award, and the United Pastors in Mission Greater Cleveland Praisefest Award.



### **Frederick E. Mills** (Upper Arlington, Ohio)

Mr. Mills is a partner in the Vorys Columbus office and the leader of the firm's government relations group. He provides counsel on legislative matters and governmental relations to Ohio, regional, national and international clients. He represents clients in many industries, including the retail, restaurant, technology, telecommunications, chemical and energy sectors, in front of the General Assembly, local jurisdictions and administrative agencies. His career highlights include serving as the Chief of Staff, Clerk and majority Counsel for the Ohio House of Representatives; Ohio Superintendent of Banks; and a legislative assistant to former Ohio Governor James Rhodes. Mr. Mills received his J.D. from Capital University Law School and his B.S. from The Ohio State University and is a member of the Columbus Bar Association.

### **Dennis P. Mulvihill** (Hudson, Ohio)

A partner with Lowe Eklund Wakefield & Mulvihill, Dennis Mulvihill's practice is primarily in the areas of product liability, medical malpractice, motor vehicle accidents and workplace injuries. Dennis has received many statewide honors in recent years. In 2012, Dennis was named one of the top 50 lawyers in Cleveland and one of the top 100 lawyers in Ohio, by *Super Lawyers, Cincinnati Magazine*. Dennis has been named an Ohio Super Lawyer by Cincinnati Magazine every year since 2008, honoring the top five percent of all lawyers in Ohio; and prior to that, was named a Rising Star by *Cincinnati Magazine*, honoring the best young lawyers in the state. These recognitions are based on the results of statewide surveys of lawyers and peer evaluation. He is a frequent lecturer, educating attorneys on matters relating to civil litigation, including such topics as: how to communicate effectively with juries, how to identify and develop product liability claims, and how to select an unbiased jury. In 2010-2011 Dennis was the President of the Ohio Association for Justice, the only state-wide association of trial attorneys who devote their practices to representing people who have been injured by the negligence of others. He has been a member of the OAJ Board of Trustees since 1999. He is a member of the American Association for Justice (AAJ), the Ohio Association for Justice (OAJ), the Cleveland Academy of Trial Attorneys (CATA), and the Cleveland Metropolitan and Ohio State Bar Associations. Dennis was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan and graduated from Kenyon College in 1988. In college he was an All-American swimmer and participated in the 1988 and 1992 Olympic swimming trials, in an effort to make the United States Olympic Swimming Team. He taught high school history for two years at University School in Hunting Valley, Ohio, and graduated from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, *cum laude*, in 1994.

### **Representative Dennis Murray** (Sandusky, Ohio)

State Representative Dennis Murray (D-Sandusky) finished serving his second and final term as the voice of the 80<sup>th</sup> Ohio House District in northern Ohio. Rep. Murray earned his bachelor's degree (*magna cum laude*) and his law degree (*cum laude*) from Georgetown University. He returned to Murray & Murray Co., LPA, his family's law firm in Sandusky where he practices as a trial attorney, working on cases dealing with economic issues, including contracts, antitrust, securities, and investor and banking fraud. In 2005, the voters of Sandusky elected him as a city commissioner. In addition to his political and legal work, Rep. Murray has immersed himself in his community. He is a lector and Eucharistic minister and formerly co-chaired the Sts. Peter &

Paul Church Pastoral Council. Rep. Murray and his wife Martha have four children in school: Nolan, Mary, Melanie and Kelly.

**Senator Larry Obhof** (Medina, Ohio)

Larry Obhof proudly represents the people of the 22nd Senate District, which includes Medina, Wayne, and Holmes counties, as well as portions of Ashland County. Senator Obhof is focused on improving Ohio's economy and creating opportunities for economic growth. He is an advocate of fiscal responsibility, smaller government, and lower taxes. For the 129th General Assembly, Senator Obhof serves as Vice Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which focuses on bills and issues that directly impact civil, criminal and commercial law. He is also a member of the standing committees on Education, Financial Institutions, and Government Oversight and Reform. In addition to these duties, Senator Obhof is a member of Ohio's Criminal Sentencing Commission, which reviews the state's sentencing statutes and sentencing patterns and makes recommendations to the legislature regarding necessary statutory changes. He also serves on the Constitutional Modernization Commission. In addition to his legislative duties, Senator Obhof is an attorney with the national law firm Baker & Hostetler LLP. He was part of the legal team that challenged the constitutionality of President Obama's health care law on behalf of a small business association and 26 states. He is also an adjunct professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Law, where he teaches a course on legislation. Obhof graduated with degrees in Economics, History, and Political Science from The Ohio State University. He earned his law degree from Yale Law School. Senator Obhof resides in Medina with his wife, Nicole, and their three daughters.

**Chad A. Readler** (Columbus, Ohio)

As an appellate and trial litigation partner in the law firm Jones Day, one of the world's largest law firms, Chad Readler has argued numerous cases before the Ohio Supreme Court and federal appellate courts, and has assisted with six cases argued before the United States Supreme Court. Prior to joining Jones Day, Chad earned his undergraduate and law degrees (with honors) from the University of Michigan, followed by a year of service as a law clerk to the Honorable Alan E. Norris, United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. In 2009, Chad was named a recipient of the American Marshall Memorial Fellowship awarded by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, travelling to Europe for three weeks to meet with European political, business and civic leaders. Last year, he traveled to Nairobi, Kenya to participate in a Lawyers Without Borders program focused on improving the trial skills of Kenyan lawyers. In Ohio, Chad was appointed by the two most recent Chief Justices to chair the Ohio Supreme Court's Commission on the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center, which works to enhance the artistic, legal and historic legacies of the Moyer Judicial Center, home of the Ohio Supreme Court. Previously, Chad was a gubernatorial appointment to the Ohio State Dental Board. Chad is a founding board member and past board chair of the Crittenton Community School, a Columbus-based charter school specializing in educating challenged students in grades 6-9. He is also an active member of the United Way of Central Ohio, which in 2011 awarded him the Robert S. Crane Jr. Young Philanthropist Award.

**Joseph P. Rugola** (Westerville, Ohio)

Joseph P. Rugola has served as the Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Public School Employees (OAPSE) since 1988. Prior to his appointment as Executive Director, Joe served as the union's Field Director and as a Field Representative. Under his leadership OAPSE has grown from just over 25,000 members to more than 38,000, which is one of the most successful organizing records in the labor movement today. Since 1988, Joe has served as an International Vice President of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). Joe served as Chairman of the Ohio AFL-CIO's Task Force on Political Action where he created the "Take Back Ohio" program which has helped to reshape the way labor influences electoral politics in Ohio. He served as Vice President of the Ohio AFL-CIO until April of 2007 when he was elected as the new federation President, and served in that position until 2010. Joe is recognized in the trade union movement and among educators as one of Ohio's most vocal and effective advocates for working families and strong public education. He is a graduate of The Ohio State University earning his degree in Political Science in 1972.

**Richard B. Saphire** (Dayton, Ohio)

Professor Richard Saphire received his BA degree from the Ohio State University in 1967, his JD degree from Chase Law School (now, Northern Kentucky State University), in 1971, and an LL.M degree from Harvard Law School in 1975. After law school, he worked as a staff attorney for the Legal Aid Society of Cincinnati. In 1975 he began his law teaching career at Oklahoma City University, and since 1976 has been on the faculty of the University of Dayton School of Law. He has also been a visiting professor at the University of San Diego School of Law and at Northern Kentucky State University College of Law. Professor Saphire's primary areas of teaching and scholarship have been United States and Ohio constitutional law, civil rights, complex litigation, professional responsibility, judicial administration, homelessness and the law, voting rights, human rights, and law and religion. Professor Saphire has been married for 41 years to Patricia. They have two sons: Daniel and Douglas.

**Sen. Michael Skindell** (Lakewood, Ohio)

Michael J. Skindell (D-Lakewood) was elected to serve Ohio's 23rd Senate District in November, 2010. He comes from the Ohio House of Representatives, where he served eight years as the Representative of Ohio's 13th House District. Senator Skindell has long respected the laws of the state of Ohio. After graduating cum laude with a bachelor's degree in business and political science from Walsh College, Skindell earned his law degree from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. At the Statehouse, Senator Skindell has advocated for greater consumer protection, affordable prescription drugs and utility costs, preserving the environment, economic opportunities for working families and the poor, universal health care and the development of Ohio's renewable energy resources. He played a key role in crafting the 2007-2008 budget that passed with just one dissenting vote. Senator Skindell has served as Chairman of the Joint Commission on Agency Rule Review and as Vice Chair of the Ohio House Consumer and Economic Protection Committee. Senator Skindell currently serves as the Ranking Member on the Senate Judiciary Committee as well as on Financial Institutions. His other committees include Government Oversight and Reform, Judiciary, Way and Means and

Economic Development, the Joint Committee on Agency Rule and Review and the Joint Legislative Ethics Committee. At home, Senator Skindell is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Barton Senior Center and Westerly Senior Apartments in Lakewood and the Lakewood Jaycees, where he served as president in 1999.

### **Representative Vernon Sykes, Co-Chair (Akron, Ohio)**

State Representative Vernon Sykes (D-Akron) brings decades of public service experience to his role at the Ohio House, having served parts of the city of Akron for 24 years. He served two terms on Akron City Council before his appointment to the House of Representatives in 1983. Term limits forced Rep. Sykes out of the Ohio House in 2000, allowing him to successfully return to serve as state representative in 2007. Rep. Sykes believes a quality education results in future success, and he speaks on that subject with an expert voice and an impressive background. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Behavior from Ohio University, a Master's Degree in Social and Applied Economics from Wright State University, a Master's of Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and a Ph.D. in Public Administration and Urban Studies from the University of Akron. Rep. Sykes enjoys the classroom, training young minds for the challenges of tomorrow. He has taught American Urban Society and Economics courses as an assistant professor at the University of Akron. He leads Kent State's Columbus Program in Intergovernmental Issues, a program that offers a selected group of college students the opportunity to live, work and study public policy in Ohio's capital city. In 2007, Rep. Sykes was awarded the Outstanding Teaching Award for Kent State University where he serves as an assistant professor of political science. As a state legislator, Rep. Sykes sponsored legislation to toughen child abuse laws, to compensate wrongly-imprisoned individuals, and to prevent railroad crossing fatalities. He also championed the strongest fair housing law in the nation during his service. During his tenure, Sykes served as president of what is now the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, as well as Assistant Majority Floor Leader. He was most recently honored by the National Association of Social Workers as Public Elected Official of the Year. Rep. Sykes serves as Ranking member of the House Finance and Appropriations Committee and Co-Chairman of the Constitutional Modernization Commission. He also serves on the State Government and Elections Committee, the Local Government Committee and the State Government and Elections Subcommittee on Redistricting.

### **Bob A. Taft (Springfield, Ohio)**

Bob Taft began his career in public service as a Peace Corps Volunteer, working as a schoolteacher in Tanzania, East Africa right after graduating from college. He went on to get a masters degree in government from Princeton and a law degree from the University of Cincinnati. His first job in government was with the Bureau of the Budget in the State of Illinois. He has served as an elected official in Ohio for 30 years, as a member of the state legislature, a county commissioner, Ohio Secretary of State and, most recently, as Governor of Ohio. In his role as Governor, he focused on improving schools, reforming Ohio's tax system, attracting advanced, high paying jobs and helping communities clean up polluted properties and provide better recreational opportunities for their citizens. He is currently a Distinguished Research Associate with the University of Dayton, lecturing in a number of different classes,

teaching a political science course on the U.S. Congress and working with the School of Education on special projects.

**Senator Charleta B. Tavares** (Columbus, Ohio)

Charleta B. Tavares was sworn in on January 3, 2011 as the first African American and Democrat woman to serve as a state Senator from central Ohio in Ohio's 208-year history. She is a committed public servant who served as a member of Columbus City Council from 1999-2010. Prior to joining City Council, Tavares left a legacy for the residents of Ohio during her 5 ½ year tenure in the Ohio General Assembly as the State Representative in the 22nd House District. Tavares was the first African-American and democrat female to serve in the state legislature from Franklin County and the first African-American woman ever to hold a leadership position in the Ohio General Assembly, opening the doors for others to follow. During her tenure in the Ohio Senate, she has co-sponsored several pieces of legislation with Republican members that were successfully passed through the legislature. She serves on a number of committees including Health, Human Services and Aging, Finance, State and Local Government and Veterans Affairs, Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR), Ways and Means and Economic Development (Ranking Member). Tavares was the primary sponsor of Senate Bill 83, giving advanced practice nurses prescribing authority for schedule II controlled substances, which was signed into law by Governor Kasich on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Tavares currently serves as Executive Director of the Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence (MACC), a statewide non-profit membership organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of care in Ohio's behavioral healthcare system and to incorporate cultural competence into systems and organizations that provide care to Ohio's vulnerable and at risk populations. Tavares currently serves as the chair of Region IX of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) and of the Wand Education Fund Board of Directors. Tavares is a graduate of Eastmoor High School and attended Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia and Ohio State University.

**Kathleen M. Trafford** (Columbus, Ohio)

Kathleen Trafford is a Partner at the Law Firm of Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP and serves as Chair of the Firm's Appellate Practice Group. She graduated cum laude from Capital University Law School and also holds a Master of Arts degree from Kent State University. She is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers, a past President of the Columbus Bar Association, and served as Co-Chair of the American Constitutional Society Columbus Lawyer's Chapter. Based in Columbus, she concentrates her practice in the area of governmental and regulatory litigation and constitutional law. She represents private parties in disputes with governmental agencies and also serves as special counsel to a number of state and local government agencies. She handles cases involving constitutional challenges to state and local laws or orders, First Amendment claims, rate making and price discrimination, licensing disputes, trademarks, professional ethics, public records, injunctions, and special writs in the Ohio Supreme Court. She has practiced law in Ohio for thirty-two years and has been privileged throughout her career to have handled more than a dozen cases involving significant Ohio constitutional issues. Prior to joining the firm in 1988, Kathleen was Deputy Chief Counsel to the Ohio Attorney General. She had primary responsibility for defending the State of Ohio in

litigation resulting from the Ohio savings and loan crisis. She argued before the United States Supreme Court in *Ohio Civil Rights Commission v. Dayton Christian Schools*, 477 U.S. 614 (1986).

**Senator Mark Wagoner** (Ottawa Hills, Ohio)

Senator Mark Wagoner represents the 2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District, which includes Erie, Wood, most of Ottawa and the western parts of Lucas County. Prior to his term in the Senate, he served two terms as a State Representative. While serving in the Legislature, Senator Wagoner has earned a reputation among his peers as an effective and strong voice for northern Ohio and is well-regarded in his district for putting partisan politics aside in order to make progress for the region. For the 129th General Assembly, Senator Wagoner serves as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and is also a member of the Rules and Reference Committee. Senator Wagoner also served as Chairman of the National Statuary Collection Study Committee, which was created to select a replacement statue for Ohio to be displayed at the United States Capitol as part of the National Statuary Hall Collection. Mark graduated cum laude with degrees in government and history from Georgetown University and holds a law degree from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. After law school, Mark returned home to Lucas County, where for the past 10 years he has been practicing law at Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP where he is now a partner. Mark and his wife, Merideth, have a son, Mickey, and a daughter, Taylor. They currently live in Lucas County where they are fixing up an old house. They are parishioners of Gesu Church in Toledo.

**Richard S. Walinski** (Toledo, Ohio)

Richard is the third generation of the Walinski family, which has been practicing law in Toledo since 1908. He practices now with the firm of Thacker & Martinsek. Twice in his 43 years of practice as a trial lawyer, Richard took sabbaticals to serve as Chief Counsel – the top legal advisor – to two of Ohio’s attorneys general: Democratic Attorney General William J. Brown and Republican Attorney General Betty D. Montgomery. He is the only person in Ohio to have been appointed as Chief Counsel by attorneys general from both major political parties. Richard served as a Consultant to the General Assembly’s Select Committee on Evidence (1979-80). He has also served two full terms on Supreme Court’s Rules Advisory Committee (now known as the Commission on the Rules of Practice & Procedure), where he served as Chairman of the Committee and also as Chairman of the Evidence Rules Subcommittee. Richard received a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from The University of Toledo. Before entering law school, he did graduate work in philosophy at Duquesne University. Richard received a law degree from The University of Toledo College of Law, where he was the founding Editor-in-Chief of The University of Toledo Law Review. He is a member of the Order of the Coif and a life member of the American Society of Writers on Legal Subjects. Richard and his wife, Shelley, make their home in Toledo, Ohio.