



Senator Dave Burke
26th Ohio Senate District

GUEST COLUMN

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JOB GROWTH HIGHLIGHTS RECENT WEEKS

DIP IN UNEMPLOYMENT IS OHIO'S LARGEST SINCE 1983

After spending the holiday season surrounded by family and friends, members of the General Assembly recently returned to Columbus hoping to pick up where they left off in 2011. First as a member of the Ohio House and now as your State Senator, I am happy to report that the past twelve months was a time of great collaboration in which legislators worked on a slate of policy proposals focused on bringing Ohio's economy back to a place of national prominence.

With the goal of bringing real relief to our residents through sound reform measures, Senate Republicans led the charge by introducing tax reforms that will place more money into the pockets of hard-working Ohioans and streamlining the way in which government operates.

The central intent of our legislative efforts began to be realized last month with the announcement of the latest unemployment figures affecting our state. Ohio's unemployment rate in December dipped to 8.5%, down significantly from the 9.5% that closed out 2010. Moreover, the drop was a half-a-percentage point lower than the previous month - the largest one-month decrease we have witnessed since 1983.

While we must continue to build on the progress of the past year, the fact that we are now at our lowest unemployment level in three years offers indicators that Ohio has finally set course on a road to recovery.

I have no doubt that this renewed spurt of job growth is at least in part due to the provisions contained in House Bill 1, which was signed into law just eleven months ago. The bill allowed for the creation of JobsOhio, an innovative, public-private partnership that pairs state resources with business professionals with proven track records of growing jobs and expanding industries. Through its early efforts, JobsOhio has already managed to create over 21,000 new jobs throughout Ohio, as well as retain an additional 61,600 positions.

Residents of the 26th District will be pleased to hear that JobsOhio is currently playing a role in four local projects. Thus far, JobsOhio has helped with the creation and retention of hundreds of full-time positions at the following companies: Ancot, LLC, of the Village of Plain City; Inland Tarp & Liner, LLC and 1600 North Main, of Fostoria; Midwest Express, Inc., of Allen Township; and the Parker-Hannifin Corporation.

Though still in its early stages, JobsOhio's track record in expanding the statewide industries has Ohio heading in the right direction.

The past few years have taken a great toll on Ohio's families, but I am confident that we are building a foundation in which real growth can take place. Paramount to our work in Columbus is seeing that Ohioans are provided with greater economic opportunity through the attraction of new business to our state and expanding our work force. While much work is before us, I am certain that through our continued efforts, Ohio will have prosperous days ahead.

As our work moves forward, it is more important than ever before that I hear your thoughts on the many issues facing our state. If you have an idea or concern that you would like to share, I ask that you contact me by phone at (614) 466-8049, by email at SD26@senate.state.oh.us, or by writing to me at One Capitol Square, 1st Floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

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Senator Burke represents the 26th Ohio Senate District, which encompasses all of Crawford, Logan, Marion, Sandusky, Union and Wyandot counties as well as portions of Ottawa and Seneca counties. For more information, please visit www.ohiosenate.gov/dave-burke.