

Written by Kathy

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – Today, Ohio Senate Minority Leader Nickie J. Antonio (D-Lakewood) (pictured), a Lakewood Democrat whose 23rd district includes 14 of Cleveland's 17 wards, issued a statement following a press conference with a group of Democratic state lawmakers at the Statehouse in Columbus in response to Gov. Mike DeWine's State of the State address, which he delivered at noon today, also at the Statehouse in Columbus.

While the Republican governor's speech may have kept him in step with top GOP leaders in Ohio he has gained fodder with in the last year or so and his promise of child healthcare vouchers for struggling mothers has bipartisan support, his support of the Republicans anti-Democratic agendas and his demand for legislative restrictions on out-of-class smartphone use of students in Ohio's K-12 schools did not sit well with some Statehouse Democrats.

And his slogan during his speech that "Ohio is the heart of it all" as he pushes for penalties against transgender students and rallies against abortion rights for Ohio women annoyed some state Democratic lawmakers like state Sen Antonio, a women's rights and Civil Rights advocate, and a loyal Democrat chosen by her peers to lead Democrats in the Ohio Senate.

She called parts of the governor's speech, much of it centered on Ohio's children and the governor's policy initiatives as he concludes his second term in office, un-inspirational and disingenuous in a press release to [Clevelandurbannews.com](https://www.clevelandurbannews.com) and [Kathywraycolemanonline.ewsblog.com](https://www.kathywraycolemanonline.ewsblog.com), Ohio's Black digital news leaders. She praised the governor for his prospective programs that support young people but panned his speech overall.

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"Certainly, the governor touched on programs and issues we can support as many of them focused on lifting up and supporting our youngest Ohioans and their future," said Antonio. "I'd like to believe that the inspirational, "Ohio is the heart of it all" were true. However, it is disingenuous to use that slogan to welcome people while the majority contradicts the sentiment with legislation that would deny the civil rights of marginalized Ohioans. Last year's three statewide elections proved how out of step majority Republicans are with everyday Ohioans. We can and we must do better."

Those statewide elections won by the Dems include two Issue 1 ballot initiatives, one by Republican state lawmakers seeking to enhance the threshold for winning statewide ballot initiatives in Ohio that failed miserably, and the other the Nov. 7 Issue 1 referendum where Ohio voters voted to enshrine the legal right to abortion access and other reproductive measures into the Ohio Constitution. Both came after the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2022 decision in *Dobbs vs Jackson* that overturned the longstanding *Roe v Wade* and gave states the authority to regulate and legislate abortion.

Antonio said that Democrats in Ohio are inclusive and that key Ohio Republicans like Gov. DeWine are doing little, if anything, to lift up the state, a state former President Donald Trump, the presumptive nominee for the Republican nomination for president this year, won in 2016 and again in 2020. And she said that Democratic state lawmakers will continue advocating for Ohio workers and families and that Democrats seek common ground with Ohio Republicans in an effort to advance policies that benefit all Ohioans.

"Democrats are dedicated to creating an inclusive, welcoming state with safe and thriving communities by investing in accessible, affordable quality child care, affordable housing, good-paying jobs, and equal access to quality education to ensure families have the support they need to succeed," said Sen Antonio, "We will continue to advocate and fight for the dignity of Ohio's workers and families this year by advancing those policies, issues, and budget items where we can find common ground with the governor, our colleagues across the aisle, and across chambers, whenever possible."

Republicans control both the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate.

Read Ohio Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio's full remarks [here](#) and watch the full Democratic response to Gov. DeWine's State of the State address [here](#)

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Clevelandurbannews.com and Kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com , the most read Black digital newspaper and Black blog in Ohio and in the Midwest. Tel: (216) 659-0473. Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com. We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview [CLICK HERE TO READ THE ENTIRE ARTICLE AT CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM, OHIO'S LEADER IN BLACK DIGITAL NEWS](#)