



News Release

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Transit Association Awards State Representative David Leland as Legislator of the Year

The Board of Directors of the Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) presented State Representative David Leland (D-Columbus) with the organization's Legislator of the Year Award. The OPTA award is presented to a member of the Ohio General Assembly who demonstrates extraordinary leadership and support in advancing legislation and policies that support the advancement and funding of public transportation in the state. Rep. Leland currently is a member of the Ohio House of Representatives representing the 22nd House district which encompasses north Columbus, including Clintonville, Northland, and North Linden.

"The OPTA Board applauds and thanks Rep. Leland for his leadership and passion to seek increased state funding for Ohio's public transportation systems," said Carrie Woody, president of the OPTA Board and director of the Lancaster-Fairfield County Public Transit System. "He played a critical role during the transportation budget process as a strong and unwavering advocate for public transportation. Thanks to his efforts, 61 urban and rural transit systems across the state will be able to provide critical transportation services for people who need to get to doctor appointments, work and school."

Rep. Leland played an instrumental role in securing \$70 million a year from the General Revenue Fund for urban and rural transit systems in the recent Biennium State Budget. The Ohio Department of Transportation budget originally proposed \$40 million a year. Transit previously received \$33 million a year.

"I am honored to receive this award because supporting public transit is about providing access to healthcare, nutrition and good jobs," said Rep. Leland "It's about helping those with disabilities fully integrate into society, and it's about fighting climate change by reducing our carbon footprint."

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“Rep. Leland understands the critical role that public transportation plays in the future of our state and communities,” said OPTA Executive Director Laura Koprowski. “Strong public transportation systems can transform lives and economies. Thanks to Rep. Leland, we look forward to increasing accessibility, while protecting one of the most affordable transportation options for Ohioans.”

First elected to the Ohio House of Representatives at age 29, Rep. Leland authored seven bills into law and was voted the outstanding freshman State Representative of the 115th Ohio General Assembly. Rep. Leland returned to the Ohio House in 2014.

About OPTA

OPTA is the primary advocate for public transportation in Ohio. The Association provides leadership, resources, training, support, technical assistance, media outreach, public engagement, and governmental relations services to public and private transit agencies and businesses across the state.

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