



Ohio Senate Leadership Team—135th General Assembly

Update January 11, 2023

By Jan Lanier, JD, RN Liaison Public Policy Committee

The Senate leadership team for both the republicans and democrats has been named. (*Source Ohiosenate.gov*).

Republicans:

Senate President: Matt Huffman (Lima)



One of the most powerful figures in state government, Matt Huffman continues as the Senate President having held that position in the previous 134th General Assembly. Huffman earned a degree in government from Notre Dame University and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Cincinnati. He has practiced law for 30 years in his family’s private practice law firm in Lima. He began his public service in 1992 serving on the Lima City Council until 2006 when he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. He is currently serving his second term in the Senate. He has been named the “Guardian of Small Business” and earned three “Watchdog of the Treasury” awards and has a strong commitment to the preservation of gun rights. He is married with four children and six grandchildren.

President Pro Tempore: Kirk Schuring (Stark County)



Senator Schuring was first elected to the General Assembly in 1993 and has served in both the house and senate. He attended Kent State University. During his years of public service, he has been recognized as Legislator of the Year by numerous organizations including the Ohio Association of Free Clinics, Ohio Association of Acupuncturists, Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Network of Children’s Advocacy Centers, and the Ohio Speech and Hearing Association. He has authored legislative initiatives benefitting healthcare, economic development, & families.

Majority Floor Leader: Rob McColley (Napoleon)



Senator McColley was appointed to the senate in 2017 after having served in the Ohio House where he also held a leadership position. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from The Ohio State University and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Toledo. Prior to election to the General Assembly, he oversaw economic development efforts for Henry County with the Community Improvement Corporation where he worked to improve local workforce development efforts between manufacturers and schools in Henry and Williams counties. He is married with three children.

Majority Whip: Theresa Gavarone (Bowling Green)



Senator Gavarone served in the Ohio House before becoming a member of the senate. She also held positions in local government, including serving on the Bowling Green City Council. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bowling Green State University and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Toledo College of Law. In addition to public service, she is a small business owner. She is married with three children.

Democrats:

Minority Leader: Nickie Antonio



Senator Antonio is returning as Minority Leader after having served in that capacity during the 134th General Assembly. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in education and master's degree in public administration from Cleveland State University. In 2011 she was a Bohnett Fellow of the Kennedy School of Harvard University Leadership Program. She was the first member of the LGBTQ community elected to the Ohio House in 2010 and the Ohio Senate in 2018.

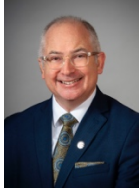
Assistant Minority Leader: Hearcel Craig (Columbus)



Senator Craig holds a Master of Science degree in administration from Central Michigan University and studied at the Ashland Theological Seminary in its Master of Divinity program. He was a

Join Together National Leadership Fellow at the Boston University School of Public Health and served two years in the U.S. Army. Before his election to the Ohio Senate, he was a member of the Columbus City Council.

Minority Whip: Kent Smith (Euclid)



Senator Smith served in the Ohio House of Representatives before coming to the senate. He graduated from Miami University and earned a Master of Science degree in Urban Studies from Cleveland State University. He also sought a PhD in economic development from Cleveland State. Prior to serving in the house, he was a member of the Euclid Board of Education for 12 years.

Assistant Minority Whip: Paula Hicks-Hudson (Toledo)



Senator Hicks-Hudson graduated from Spelman College with a bachelor's degree in political science and journalism. She holds a master's degree in communications development from Colorado State University and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Iowa. During her 35-year professional career she worked as an assistant Lucas County prosecutor, assistant public defender, and assistant attorney general for the State of Ohio. She was also the legal director for the City of Toledo City Council. She is trained in mediation and advocacy and is the mother of two adult children. She lost her husband of 45 years in 2018.