


Ohio General Assembly

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Jump to: [navigation](#), [search](#)

Ohio General Assembly



General Information

Type: [State legislature](#)

Term limits: [2 terms \(8 years\) in Senate](#), [4 terms \(8 years\) in House](#)

2011 session start: [January 3, 2011](#)

Website: [Official Legislature Page](#)

Leadership

Senate President: [Tom Niehaus \(R\)](#)

House Speaker: [William Batchelder \(R\)](#)

Majority Leader: [Jimmy Stewart \(R\)](#) (Senate), [Matt Huffman \(R\)](#) (House)

Minority leader: [Capri Cafaro \(D\)](#) (Senate), [Armond Budish \(D\)](#) (House)

Structure

Members: [33 \(Senate\)](#), [99 \(House\)](#)

Length of term: 4 years (Senate), 2 years (House)

Authority: Art II, Ohio Constitution

Salary: \$60,584/year

Elections

Last Election: November 2, 2010
17 seats (Senate)
99 seats (House)

Next election: November 4, 2012
16 seats (Senate)
99 seats (House)

Redistricting: Ohio Redistricting Commission has control

Contents

[hide]

- 1 History
- 2 Sessions
 - 2.1 2011
 - 2.2 2010
- 3 Term Limits
- 4 Chambers
 - 4.1 State Senate
 - 4.2 State House
- 5 Legislators
 - 5.1 Salaries
 - 5.2 When sworn in
- 6 Joint legislative committees
- 7 External links
- 8 References

The **Ohio General Assembly** is the state legislature of Ohio. It consists of the 99-member Ohio House of Representatives and the 33-member Ohio State Senate. Both houses of the General Assembly meet at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus.

History

The second Ohio Constitution, effective in 1851, took away the power of the General Assembly to choose the state's executive's officers, granting that right to the voters. A complicated formula

apportioned legislators to Ohio counties and the number of seats in the legislative houses varied from year-to-year.

The Ohio Politics Almanac by Michael F. Curtin (Kent State University Press) described apportionment thus:

The new [1851] constitution ... contained a complicated formula for apportionment, the so-called "major fraction rule." Under it, the state's population was divided by 100, with the resulting quotient being the ratio of representation in the House of Representatives. Any county with a population equal to at least half the ratio was entitled to one representative; a county with a population of less than half the ratio was grouped with an adjacent county for districting; a county containing a population of at least one and three-fourths the ratio was entitled to two representatives; a county with a population equal to three times the ratio was entitled to three representatives. To determine Senate districts, a similar procedure was followed; the starting point, however was figured by dividing the state's population by 35. The ratios for the House and Senate and the resulting apportionment was determined by a board consisting of the governor, auditor, and secretary of state.

In 1903, the apportionment system was modified by the Hanna amendment, which also gave the governor veto power over the assembly's acts, which could be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the assembly's houses. The last state constitutional convention, held in 1912, gave the governor a line-item veto, but reduced the supermajority required for overriding the veto to three-fifths. In 1956, a referendum increased the terms of state senators from two to four years.

The Hanna amendment (which guaranteed each county at least one representative and all members elected at large) guaranteed that rural areas of Ohio would dominate the legislature by giving them disproportionate representation. Several decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1960s, however, mandated apportionment proportional to population. Reapportionment was ordered in 1964. Starting with the 1966 election, the number of seats in the two chambers were fixed at their present numbers of 33 and 99.

Sessions

Article II of the Ohio Constitution establishes when the General Assembly is to meet. Section 8 of Article II states that the regular session is to convene on the first Monday in January of each year, or the following day if that Monday is a legal holiday.

Section 8 also contains rules for convening special sessions of the General Assembly. It empowers the Governor of Ohio or the presiding officers of the General Assembly to convene a special session. For the presiding officers to convene the session, they must act jointly.

2011

See also: Dates of 2011 state legislative sessions

In 2011, the General Assembly will be in session from January 3 through a date to be determined by the Ohio Legislature. ^[1]

2010

See also: Dates of 2010 state legislative sessions

In 2010, the General Assembly convened its legislative session on January 4th, and it remains in session throughout the year. ^[2]



Term Limits

Republican activists, led by Fred A. Lennon, began pursuing term limits in the 1980s. In 1992, a referendum set term limits of eight consecutive years -- four consecutive terms in the house and two consecutive terms in the senate. Terms are considered consecutive if they are separated by less than four years.

Chambers



State Senate

The Ohio State Senate is the upper house in Ohio's legislature. Members of the Ohio Senate are limited to two consecutive four-year elected terms. Service to fill out another member's uncompleted term does not count against the state's term limits. There are 33 members elected from individual districts. The current party distribution is 21 Republicans and 12 Democrats. Each Senator represents approximately 344,035 constituents. ^[3] Each Senate district corresponds exactly to 3 of the 99 State House districts.

Party	As of April 2011
 <u>Democratic Party</u>	10
 <u>Republican Party</u>	23
Total	33

State House

The Ohio House of Representatives is the lower house of Ohio's legislature. The House first met in Chillicothe on March 3 1803, under the later superseded constitution of that year. The 127th General Assembly convened in January 2007. There are 99 members of the house, elected from single-member districts. Every even-numbered year, all the seats are up for re-election. The current party distribution is 53 Republicans and 46 Democrats. Each member represents an average of 114,678 people.^[4]

Party	As of April 2011
 <u>Democratic Party</u>	40
 <u>Republican Party</u>	59
Total	99

Legislators

Salaries

See also: Comparison of state legislative salaries

As of 2010, members of the Ohio Legislature are paid \$60,584/year during legislative sessions. Legislators receive no per diem.^[5]

The \$60,584/year that Ohio legislators are paid as of 2010 is an increase over the \$58,933.56/year they were paid during legislative sessions in 2007. Per diem is the same.^[6]