

 **SUNNY**
70°
more weather

 [Apartments.com -- You Want What You Want!](#) advertisement

Subscribe to The Blade e-edition 
[click here!](#)



Monday,
June 02, 2003

HOME

MARKETPLACE

SEARCH

Search by keyword(s):
GO

Tips on searching

ARCHIVES

- Browse Last 30 Days
- The Blade Archives
- AP Archives

NEWS SECTIONS

- Latest News
- Sports
- Business
- Arts & Entertainment
- Davis-Besse In-depth
- Opinion
- Religion
- Health & Science
- Technology
- Columnists
- Obituaries
- Special Reports
- Weather
- AP Wire
- Photos of the Day
- Lottery
- Daily Log
- Today's Front Page

CLASSIFIED

- General
- Real Estate
- Autos
- Jobs
- Boats/Recreation
- Celebrations
- Legal Notices
- Directory of Worship
- Personals

COMMUNITY

- Golf Guide
- Restaurant Guide
- Arts/Events Calendar
- Educational Services

News

Ohio News | Article published Sunday, June 1, 2003
OHIO STATEHOUSE

Incomes swell for many amid budget woes

By [JAMES DREW](#)
BLADE COLUMBUS BUREAU CHIEF

COLUMBUS - Five years ago, 19 of Ohio's 132 state legislators were paid \$100,000 or more per year, when their state pay and outside income were tallied.

Now, at least 33 legislators are at or above a six-figure income level, according to financial disclosure statements filed for 2002.

The development occurs as the Ohio General Assembly struggles by July 1 to balance the two-year operating budget.

In February, John Corlett had a proposal for legislators to consider: A temporary 2.5 percent surcharge on the 1.4 percent of Ohio taxpayers with incomes of at or above \$200,000.

The surcharge would raise an extra \$500 million per year, said Mr. Corlett, senior fellow at the Federation for Community Planning, a Cleveland-based group that researches health and social services issues.

Mr. Corlett said the surcharge may make sense because those wealthy taxpayers received about \$670 million in tax cuts when the state budget ran a surplus in the mid to-late 1990s.

Instead, the Republican-controlled legislature is reaching a consensus that a better approach would be raising the state sales tax rate from 5 to 6 percent for at least two years.

Of the 33 legislators with incomes of at least \$100,000 last year, 21 are in leadership positions, committee chairmen, or the No. 1 Democrat on a committee.

A tax policy group says a sales tax increase would be close to five times as great a burden to low-income taxpayers as it would be to the most affluent Ohioans. Families with incomes from \$15,000 to \$65,000 would pay at least three times as much of their earnings with the higher tax as the wealthiest Ohioans, said Zach Schiller, research director for Policy Matters Ohio.

Based on income last year, as many as 39 of the 132 state legislators may be in that income category - but most are not in leadership positions or committee chairs that have the most power in the Statehouse.

Some wonder if wealthier legislators have lost touch with the poor and are swayed too much by wealthy contributors.

The Blade e-edition
[click here](#)
Easy access.
Easy to read.
Convenient.



toledo
in this issue...

CONTESTS

LIFESTYLES FOR LADIES ONLY
[Click here to win a free 1 year membership!](#)

CHICAGO IN CONCERT
[Click here to win tickets!](#)

HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS IN CONCERT
[Click here to win tickets!](#)

WEIRD AL YANKOVICH IN CONCERT
[Click here to win tickets!](#)

FLY TOLEDO EXPRESS AND WIN!
[Win a two-year lease on a Ford Focus! Click here!](#)

WINNERS LIST
[Click here!](#)

- Forums
- E-thepeople
- TV Listings
- Movie Showtimes
- Horoscopes

WEB FEATURES

- Toledo Pros
- House & Home Show
- toledo
- Contests
- KidZone
- Mud Hens Web Cam

SERVICES

- Set As Homepage
- Subscriber Services
- Email Newsletter
- The Blade e-edition
- Advertise
- About Us
- Contact Us
- Help & FAQs

"Clearly, if you are a middle-class person, it is easy to lose touch with what it is like to make ends meet," said Catherine Turcer, a lobbyist with Ohio Citizen Action, a statewide consumer and environmental group. "And the people who have access during this budget time are those who are politically powerful or have money, or both."

Mr. Corlett and Mr. Schiller don't see evidence of a correlation between income level and the outcome of the tax policy debate. For example, state Sen. Ray Miller (D., Columbus) is part of the \$100,000-plus club, but he focuses most of his work on human services spending and other programs that benefit the poor.

"There's a lot of conventional wisdom about taxes and how they influence behavior that is not correct," said Mr. Corlett, who noted research has shown that higher personal income tax rates won't chase CEOs out of states.

In fact, of the 29 House members who may fall into the income category of \$15,000 to \$65,000 - 17 voted in favor of the House version of the budget bill that would increase the sales tax rate from 5 per cent to 6 per cent. The bill also would enable voters to get rid of the sales tax hike by allowing video gambling machines at horse racing tracks.

The Senate is expected to vote on its version of the budget this week.

State Sen. Eric Fingerhut (D., Cleveland), a consultant for the Federation for Community Planning, said Senate Democrats are focusing on a proposal to increase some business taxes to better "balance the burden" with individual taxpayers.

State Rep. Lynn Olman (R., Maumee), who is among three legislators from northwest Ohio with an annual income over \$100,000, said all taxpayers must have "equal responsibility."

"To pick out a specific group of people - whether rich or poor or in between - and say they ought to carry us out of the deficit abyss is unfair and un-American," said Mr. Olman, who is an insurance agent.

Mr. Olman said a sales tax rate increase is the "easiest, most palatable, least painful way" for the state to generate more revenue.

Article Features >>

-  [Printer-friendly version](#)
-  [Forum on this topic](#)

-  [Email to a friend](#)
-  [View the Latest News index](#)

Subcategories >>

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2002 Census | Elections | Other |
| America Remembers | Environment | Politics |
| Davis-Besse | Fires | Regional News |
| Lucas County | Higher Education | Religion |
| Medical | K-12 Education | Suburban News |
| Accidents/Vehicular | Michigan News | Transportation |
| City of Toledo | Minority Issues | War on terrorism |

ASK THE PROS

AUTOMOTIVE - NEW/USED/LEASING: CADILLAC, ISUZU & KIA
[Taylor Automotive](#)

AUTOMOTIVE - NEW/USED/LEASING: DODGE, CHRYSLER & JEEP
[Monroe Dodge Chrysler Jeep Superstore](#)

CHIROPRACTIC
[Schwanger & Associates Chiropractic Offices](#)

COMPUTER RETAIL SALES, SERVICE & REPAIR, AND NETWORK SOLUTIONS
[Computer Discount](#)

COSMETIC AND FAMILY DENTIST
[Jonathan Frankel, D.D.S.](#)

FUNERAL DIRECTOR
[Strabler Funeral Home](#)

HEARING AIDS
[Hearing Associates, Inc.](#)

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING
[Shamy Heating & Air Conditioning](#)

HOME MORTGAGE EQUITY
[Midwest Mortgage Investments, LTD](#)

INVESTMENTS, RETIREMENT PLANNING & FINANCIAL ADVICE
[American Express Financial Advisors](#)

PERSONAL INJURY AND MALPRACTICE LAW
[Barkan & Robon Ltd.](#)

PLASTIC SURGEON
[Arrowhead Plastic Surgeons, Inc.](#)

PLUMBING CONTRACTOR
[The Clean Plumbers](#)

REAL ESTATE AUCTIONS
[Beth Rose Auction Co.](#)

REALTOR
[Char Winckowski - Re/Max Central Group](#)

[Courts](#)

[Obituaries - News](#)

[Weather](#)

[Crime](#)

[Ohio News](#)

[Zoo & Library](#)



 [Apartments.com -- You Want What You Want!](#)

advertisement

© 2003 The Blade. [Privacy Statement](#). By using this service, you accept the terms of our [visitor agreement](#): Please read it.

The Toledo Blade Company, 541 N. Superior St., Toledo, OH 43660, (419) 724-6000
To contact a specific department or an individual person, [click here](#).