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NO GUESTS, ID WRISTBANDS REQUIRED FOR UD ST. PADDY'S DAY PARTY. A2



RETIREMENT MOVE DOESN'T ALWAYS MEAN 'LIVING IN PARADISE.' B4

HOW TO TELL IF YOU WILL SAVE MONEY BY USING TRUMPRX. C6

LOCAL IMPACT

Tech companies sign pledge to lower electricity costs

Ohio Sen. Jon Husted attended roundtable and weighed in on agreement.

By **Bryn Dippold**
Staff Writer

Representatives from leading AI and tech companies signed an agreement Wednesday pledging

to protect Americans from higher electricity prices due to data center expansion.

President Donald Trump gathered leaders from Amazon, Google, Meta, Microsoft, OpenAI, Oracle and xAI to sign the Ratepayer Protection Pledge, which states these companies:

- Agree to build, bring or buy new generation resources
- Cover the cost of all power delivery infrastructure upgrades

■ Negotiate separate rate structures with utility providers and state governments

■ Commit to pay these rates for power whether they use the electricity or not

■ Coordinate with grid operators to make backup generators available

■ Hire and train talent from within the communities where

Pledge continued on **A6**



President Donald Trump holds up the Ratepayer Protection Pledge after signing it in the Indian Treaty Room of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House complex Wednesday in Washington.

JACQUELYN MARTIN / AP

LOCAL IMPACT

Ohio bill proposes more cash for school busing

If passed, bill would give \$88 million for transportation.

By **Eileen McClory**
Staff Writer

A bill in the Ohio House would provide \$88 million for school transportation and require school districts to provide tiers of time in which the private and charter schools they transport students to can start, among other provisions.

The bill would restore \$45,000 grants for school districts to purchase buses, which was cut in the last budget. The cost of a new school bus is more than \$100,000.

Schools would also get more money based on the pupils that they are transporting.

State Rep. Desiree Tims, D-Dayton, a bill cosponsor, said schools were not buying new buses during COVID-19 because students weren't going to school, so many districts are behind on replacing those buses. Districts have also fallen behind on maintenance, she said.

Tims also criticized the Ohio law requiring public schools to transport charter and private school students who live within their boundaries. Most states only require public schools to transport their own students.

Tims said the law, which was created in the 1960s, was "archaic" and didn't allow for goodwill between public school transportation, parents and charter schools.

State Rep. Phillip Robinson Jr., D-Solon, who sponsored the bill, said no matter where he has gone in the state, he hears from



Ruskin Elementary School students board a bus on Friday on McClure Street in Dayton. A bill in the Ohio House would provide \$88 million for school transportation. BRYANT BILLING / STAFF

people about how the bus system is not working, particularly in urban areas and rural areas.

He said he believes this is a way for public, private and charter schools to work together better.

"I definitely understand the choices parents have to make to send kids to school," Robinson said. "At the end of the day, however, I believe the first principle we need to adopt here is that public schools' dollars are for public transportation for public school students."

State Rep. Phil Plummer, R-Butler Twp., said he thinks the bill

has potential and would like to work on it, though he said he wished the bill had been introduced as bipartisan.

He said the current busing system clearly doesn't work for anyone, as charters and public schools blame each other for failures to get kids to school.

"We're swimming upstream if we don't educate our kids," Plummer said.

Todd Silverthorn, executive director of the Ohio Association of Pupil Transportation and the transportation supervisor for Kettering City Schools, noted the

cost of buses has significantly increased since he began his career.

"The Ohio Association for Pupil Transportation fully supports the proposed funding in House Bill 545," he said. "These grants would provide meaningful financial assistance to school districts and could allow districts to allocate more of their local (levy) budgets toward other important safety investments, such as bus cameras and additional safety equipment for students and drivers."

Bus continued on **A6**

LOCAL IMPACT

Local charter schools get first strike

Schools would need three strikes before a forced closure.

By **Eileen McClory**
Staff Writer

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has awarded a strike against two local elementary charter schools: Miami Valley Academy and Dayton Leadership Academy.

Ohio Revised Code says the schools would need to get three strikes against them before they are forced to close. Each school only has one strike. Fifteen schools are listed on the 2026 Community Schools at Risk for Closure list.

Both Miami Valley Academy and Dayton Leadership Academy got two stars overall on the state report card. Neither school is the lowest rated in the state or even the lowest-rated charter school in the region. The criteria for being at risk of closure is:

■ Charter schools serving K-3 meet the criteria if they earn: A one-star rating on the Early Literacy Component; OR an overall rating of less than two stars.

■ Community schools that serve 4-8 grade meet the criteria if they earn: a one-star rating on the Achievement Component and a one-star rating

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THE LATEST

Trump coming to Cincinnati this week to discuss drug prices. **A3**

2025 All-Star Abbott named Opening Day starter for Reds. **D1**

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