



**Friday, March 16, 2018**

## **Antani Walks Back Gun Comments; Cordray Adds 14 County Party Chairs To List Of Endorsers; COHHIO Calls For More Affordable Housing**

A lawmaker's comments on guns to a newspaper has led him to revisit his statement and drawn criticism from others.

Rep. Niraj Antani (R-Miamisburg) told *The Dayton Daily News* that he believes students should have the option to carry long guns in schools.

"My view is that anyone who is of age should be able to carry a firearm wherever they want," the paper **reported**. "The only restriction I believe in is for private property."

However, on Friday he took to **Twitter** to address the subsequent uproar.

"Yesterday, I learned a lesson. A reporter asked me a question about Second Amendment issues. I told the reporter I believed that gun free zones do not work, and that every law abiding person who is of age has a right to carry to defend themselves," he wrote.

"I am not advocating the arming of students. I am not proposing or introducing any bill or legislation detailing with what was in the *Dayton Daily News* and WHIO. I did a poor job of communicating my position, and I apologize for that. I hope you will give me the benefit of the doubt by contacting me directly so I can better explain my position."

Before he released his statement, **Rep. Teresa Fedor** (D-Toledo) and Democratic gubernatorial candidate Dennis Kucinich released their own criticizing Rep. Antani.

Rep. Fedor said the suggestion "violates every shred of commonsense, responsible lawmaking, and is better saved for oppressive regimes in foreign lands - not America."

"We should be deeply troubled and angered by politicians who suggest arming students is an appropriate response to the national discussion on common sense ways to reduce gun violence in our

nation," she said. "Too many politicians have robbed our students of a childhood by failing to keep them safe, which has pushed them out of our schools and into the streets to fight for accountability from their elected officials. It's clear some politicians still aren't listening."

Mr. Kucinich called Rep. Antani's suggestion "sheer madness."

"Sanity and safety demand that we not encourage more weapons in our schools and that we outlaw assault weapons," he said. "This is an urgent matter of public health and safety. We must not wait for another incident."

**Party Chairs:** The gubernatorial campaign of Richard Cordray on Friday announced the endorsements of 14 county party chairs in southern Ohio.

"Democrats need a ticket in 2018 that can compete in every corner of our state with a proven record of spreading economic opportunity to all Ohioans - Rich Cordray and Betty Sutton are that ticket," Dinah Phillips, Highland County Democratic Party Chair and head of the Association of Southern Ohio Democratic Chairs, said in a statement.

"Rich and Betty have spent their careers in public service standing on the side of people and communities that have been left behind by the special interests, and they'll continue that work as our next governor and lieutenant governor."

Added Mr. Cordray: "Too many places, particularly in Southern Ohio, have been neglected by leaders in the statehouse who care more about cutting taxes for the wealthy than investing in our rural communities - that's wrong and it needs to end."

**Affordable Housing:** The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio said state lawmakers have not put enough attention on the lack of affordable housing for low-income residents.

A report released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition found that just 42% of rental units are affordable and available for every 100 extremely low-income tenant households in the state.

"We hear a lot about the opiate epidemic, infant mortality, jobs, and education. But the candidates haven't said much about Ohio's affordable housing crunch yet," COHHIO Executive Director Bill Faith said in a statement. "Housing is key to fixing all these issues. People need a safe, decent affordable place to live in order to recover from addiction, raise a healthy baby, hold down a job, and do well in school. We'll never build a healthier, wealthier, better educated Ohio unless we first stabilize our foundation - housing."

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