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Staff Reporter

Last week, speaker of the Ohio House William G. Batchelder came to Cleveland to visit the Call & Post Newspaper and introduce himself to the Black community.

Batchelder is a Republican who grew up in Medina and represents District 69.

Batchelder shared his concern for helping Ohio anyway he can and talked about his main objective which is jobs, jobs and more jobs. Since he has been in office, so far, they have introduced 108 Bills.

He shared what he said in his inaugural address. Batchelder stated that, “Over the next two years, I pledge to all Ohioans that the House of Representatives will work diligently to change Ohio’s direction by creating expanded opportunities for business growth through legislative

proposals that will lay the framework for both short and long-term prosperity."

"Seventy-five percent of the jobs created in the state of Ohio are created in small business. They are not created by huge corporations and those who are very wealthy," Batchelder said.

He has stated that top priorities for him in the new session is to reduce regulations on small businesses, reform the workers' compensation system, root out government waste and abolish the estate tax.

House Bill 1 was the first legislation to reach Kasich's desk and, last week, he signed it quickly just two days after lawmakers in the Ohio House and Senate gave their approval. The speaker said, "It's important that we move on anything concerning jobs. Reason… people need jobs… With jobs comes hope."

While in Cleveland, Batchelder toured the historic Karamu Theater and had a first hand glimpse at the various programs they offered. After a brief presentation from Karamu's Executive Director Gregory Ashe, he witness seniors line dancing and was very impressed over a room and display of his friend the late Carl B. Stokes.

Before leaving the Karamu Theater, he was treated to an array of song from the youth of Karamu. Batchelder shared how he had always heard of this great place but had never been in this great facility.

His next stop was to the Cleveland Playhouse on Carnegie to a crowd of leaders of Northeast Ohio. The room was full of pastors, politicians, executive directors, lawyers and business leaders. Batchelder gave a brief history about him having previously served in the Ohio House for 30 years.

He currently is serving his third consecutive term and was elected by his colleagues to serve as House Speaker during the 129th General Assembly. Batchelder shared his enthusiasm in helping Northeast Ohio before taking questions.

Batchelder talked about education and how 82 percent of kids in Catholic Schools are not catholic these days. Due to the low census turn out this past year, Ohio will lose at least 2 Congressional seats he shared.

One of the questions came from Cleveland City Councilman Jeff Johnson who wanted to know if Batchelder would support Central State University.

Johnson stressed the importance of keeping the school open.