



THE OHIO  
**WOMEN'S**  
PUBLIC POLICY NETWORK

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**THE WOMEN'S PUBLIC POLICY NETWORK**

**2016 ELECTION VOTER GUIDE**

*A REVIEW OF WHERE THE OHIO US SENATE CANDIDATES STAND ON ISSUES  
OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY*

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## **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

This voter guide is a side-by-side comparison of where the Democratic and Republican candidates in the Ohio US Senate race stand on the issues outlined in the Women’s Economic Security Policy Agenda, agreed upon by members of the Ohio Women’s Public Policy Network.

Candidates’ voting records, public statements, comments from interviews or speeches, campaign websites, policy position papers, and additional trusted online sources were used to determine their position on the issues.

*This guide is intended to serve as a voter education guide, and is not meant as an endorsement of any candidate or political party.*



SUPPORTIVE



MIXED



OPPOSED



UNKNOWN



**Ted Strickland (D)**  
Challenger



**Rob Portman (R)**  
Incumbent

POLICY GOAL	Ted Strickland (D) Challenger	Rob Portman (R) Incumbent
Increase the minimum wage		
Improve the state earned income tax credit to benefit more working women		
Increase access to paid sick and family leave		
Increase affordability of childcare, expand public preschool		
Ensure pension protection and retirement security		
Ensure pay equity for all women by protecting against pay discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability		
Promote fair and flexible work schedules		
Protect the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively for fair wages, benefits, and working conditions		
Support breastfeeding mothers in the workplace		
Protect against discrimination on the basis of pregnancy or caregiver status		
Study ways to eliminate barriers to women's career advancement		
Promote ways to ensure opportunity for women to advance and excel in the business and entrepreneurial sector		
Protect against discrimination against survivors of sexual and domestic violence in housing and the workplace		
Protect against discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity		
Preserve access to and increase affordability of comprehensive healthcare for low-income and working women		
Protect against cultural barriers for obtaining healthcare services		
Keep lawmakers and employers out of healthcare decisions		
Restore access to contraception, abortion, and other reproductive healthcare services		
Ensure the physical and mental health needs of survivors of sexual and domestic violence are met without cost to the survivor, and the crimes against them are investigated		
Support community programs that prevent sexual and domestic violence such as healthy relationship education		
Protect sexual and domestic violence and stalking survivors		

## WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY AGENDA

The Women's Economic Security agenda of the Women's Public Policy Network is made up of three main areas: promoting economic security for women and families, ensuring fairness and opportunity in the workplace and improving women's health and well-being.

### Promoting Economic Security for Women and Families

#### INCREASE THE MINIMUM WAGE



##### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has stated his support for increasing the federal minimum wage to \$12 per hour with exemptions available for very small businesses. In his campaign policy platform for 'Restoring Economic Fairness' - hosted on his website - he states that he supports an increase in the minimum wage, and would fight in the Senate for a higher minimum wage.



##### ROB PORTMAN

Portman has expressed both concern and support for raising the minimum wage through his public statements and his voting record. He voted against a 2014 proposal in the Senate to increase the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. When questioned about the bill, he stated that "I'm not in favor of the proposal for \$10.10. I think it's too high, too fast. I think it will result in job loss."

He has voiced his support for Ohio's strategy of an annual indexing to inflation as a path forward for increasing the federal minimum wage. He voted for a proposal that was included in a nonbinding budget resolution in 2015 to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 to an unspecified amount.

Following the vote he stated, "I support the way Ohio handles minimum wage. Ohio has a higher minimum wage of \$8.10 and is indexed to inflation, and I support that. I supported the amendment today because it opens the door to indexing the minimum wage as Ohio does."

However, Portman has not signed on as a cosponsor of the Raise the Wage Act, which was introduced a month after his budget vote and would gradually increase the federal minimum wage to \$12 per hour.

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#### IMPROVE THE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT TO BENEFIT MORE WORKING WOMEN



##### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has made no mention of the earned income tax credit in his current campaign, so it is unclear of where he stands on the issue. No evidence was found of Strickland's position on the federal EITC, which would be the focus of this issue if he was elected to the Senate.

When Strickland was governor from 2006 - 2010, he did not have nor did he introduce a policy for a state EITC. However, during his 2010 reelection campaign he criticized his opponent John Kasich for his stance on opposing the federal EITC when Kasich was in Congress. Strickland is quoted in an article stating that the EITC is "a tax rebate for people who punch in, work hard, and don't hide their assets in tax shelters and off shore accounts." Additionally, he did vote in 1993 to expand the federal EITC while in Congress.



**ROB PORTMAN**

As a Senator, Portman has not voted on nor been asked for his position on a state earned income tax credit. However, Portman has voiced concerns about the federal EITC, stating that he prefers a payroll tax break for low-wage workers. In a Cleveland Plain Dealer article that profiled this issue, his concerns are summarized as, “he has problems with the Earned Income Tax Credit, which supplements low-wage jobs, because it has a high rate of overpayment, with reports of 20 percent to 25 percent. But he said he would be interested in providing a break on the payroll tax for low-wage earners, which would have the effect of boosting wages but be less prone to complicated administration and error.”

**INCREASE ACCESS TO PAID SICK AND FAMILY LEAVE**



**TED STRICKLAND**

During his campaign for Senate, Strickland has voiced his support for a federal paid family and medical leave insurance program. Within his ‘Ohio Families First: Fighting for Women and Working Families’ platform, he states that if elected to the Senate he “...will support the Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act that would provide working people with up to 12 weeks of partial income when they take time for their own serious health condition, including pregnancy leave and childbirth recovery and for a serious condition of a parent, child, spouse, or domestic partner.”

Strickland’s ‘Fighting for Women and Working Families’ platform also includes support of access to paid sick days. The document states that if elected to the Senate, he would support the Healthy Family Act, providing workers with the opportunity to earn up to seven paid sick days per year.



**ROB PORTMAN**

While Portman has not become a co-sponsor of the Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act in the Senate - which would have required paid family and medical leave for those employed and engaged in caregiving during their time off - he has not voiced his opposition for the issue of paid family leave.

Additionally, he has not signed on as a co-sponsor of the Healthy Families Act, legislation that would provide workers with paid sick leave. During the 2015 budget debate, Portman voted in favor of a budget amendment that would strengthen paid sick leave, but this vote was largely symbolic as it was a non-binding resolution. It is unclear of how he would vote for paid sick leave legislation like the Healthy Families Act.

**INCREASE AFFORDABILITY OF CHILDCARE, EXPAND PUBLIC PRESCHOOL**



**TED STRICKLAND**

One of the pillars of Strickland’s ‘Ohio Families First’ platform is the need for “Increasing The Availability Of Affordable And Quality Childcare.” Within the plan, he states that if elected to the Senate, he will “work to increase the tax credits available to both families and employers so that we help tackle this challenge and make sure women and families have affordable, quality options for childcare.”

Additionally, when he was governor one of his state budgets included increased funding for childcare providers, all-day kindergarten, toddler specialists and early-childhood mental health services.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman voted in favor of the Child Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act in 2014, which was signed into law including two amendments offered by him. He sent out a press release to applaud its passage, and voice his support for the legislation. However, in a non-binding budget vote Portman voted to oppose a measure expanding preschool opportunities for low and middle-income families that would have been offset with revenue from closing tax loopholes on corporations.

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## **ENSURE PENSION PROTECTION AND RETIREMENT SECURITY**



### **TED STRICKLAND**

On the issue of retirement within his Ohio Families First platform, he states that he will “oppose any effort to privatize Social Security, to raise the retirement age, or to make seniors gamble with their retirement on the stock market.” There has been no mention of the issue of pension protection or retirement security beyond his vow to protect Social Security. No further evidence could be found of Strickland’s position on this issue.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman has voted to oppose future limits on Social Security, but has also opposed measures that would expand the program. During the 2015 budget session he voted against a non-binding budget amendment calling for an expansion of Social Security that was intended to set up future discussions on the issue. In the past, Portman was a vocal supporter of privatizing Social Security and wrote a 2014 op-ed favoring reforms to the program including increasing the retirement age.

Portman has been an active supporter of pension protections for workers. He introduced the Pension Accountability Act in 2015 as a way to fix changes in the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act, which gave power to the Treasury Department to overrule votes taken by pension participants on proposed cuts in large plans. Portman’s Pension Accountability Act would give retirees and workers threatened by pension cuts a voice in the final decision by making their vote binding; preventing their vote to be overruled by the Treasury Department. Portman is also a co-sponsor of the Miners Protection Act, which is a bill that aimed to protect the pensions and health care benefits of retired coal miners in Ohio as promised by the United Mine Workers of America’s (UMWA) 1974 pension plan.

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## ENSURE PAY EQUITY FOR ALL WOMEN BY PROTECTING AGAINST PAY DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER, RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, AGE, OR DISABILITY



### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has stated that he would support the Paycheck Fairness Act if elected to the US Senate. His website states that “I am a proud supporter of the Paycheck Fairness Act and in the US Senate I will fight to make sure that Ohio women receive equal pay for equal work.”



### ROB PORTMAN

Portman has stated his support for equal pay for equal work. He has co-sponsored two bills promoting equal pay that build on current legal protections in the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights. The Gender Advancement in Pay Act requires that employers pay men and women equal wages for equal work and the Workplace Advancement Act ensures workers are aware of their rights in the workplace.

Yet, Senator Portman has voted against equal pay measures that would provide remedies to victims of discrimination in the workplace, such as the Paycheck Fairness Act. During the 2015 budget debate, he opposed a proposal that would have allowed women to seek punitive damages in pay equity cases. He instead voted for a weaker measure that would allow discussion of wages without retaliation from employers. In March of 2015 he voted against an amendment to the Equal Pay Act of 1963 that would establish a deficit-neutral reserve fund to ensure stronger wage gap policies for women.

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## PROMOTE FAIR AND FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES



### TED STRICKLAND

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Strickland's position on the issue.



### ROB PORTMAN

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Portman's position on the issue.

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## PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS TO ORGANIZE AND BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY FOR FAIR WAGES, BENEFITS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS



### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has expressed his support for the right to collectively bargain. On his Senate campaign website, he states under his Ohio Families First: Restoring Economic Fairness platform that he will “...work to stop any and all efforts to undermine collective bargaining, including any so-called “Right to Work” laws.” Additionally, he has been endorsed by labor union organizations such as the AFL-CIO and the United Auto Workers, which strongly support the right to collectively bargain.



**ROB PORTMAN**

During recent campaign stops to labor events, Portman has stated that he does not support legislation that would limit collective bargaining. He voiced his opposition to Ohio Senate Bill 5, which was a law that would have limited the right to collectively bargain in Ohio that was repealed by Ohio voters in 2011. Additionally, he has been endorsed by some labor organizations in this current Senate race including the Teamsters.

However, Portman did introduce a bill limiting federal employees’ rights to work with unions in 2013. He also co-sponsored a federal “right-to-work” bill in 2001 that would have greatly limited the rights of union members.

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**SUPPORT BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS IN THE WORKPLACE**



**TED STRICKLAND**

Strickland has stated that he is a supporter of the Affordable Care Act, which requires employers to give women who are breastfeeding breaks and a safe environment to pump while at work. On his website, Strickland called a repeal of the ACA “costly and dangerous.” However, Strickland has not taken a position that we can find on expanding protections to breastfeeding moms beyond protecting the ACA.



**ROB PORTMAN**

Portman does not appear to have directly addressed this issue during his campaign. However, he has missed at least three opportunities to support protections for breastfeeding mothers in the workplace by not signing on as a co-sponsor of bills before the U.S. Senate. None of the bills were voted on so his opposition or support of those bills is unclear. However, Portman has voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which extended protections to non-exempt workers in workplaces with more than 50 employees to take breaks in suitable facilities to express breast milk.

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**PROTECT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF PREGNANCY OR CAREGIVER STATUS**



**TED STRICKLAND**

News coverage highlighted a campaign email from Strickland that was sent out in spring of 2016 stating his support for the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which would protect against discrimination in the workplace for new or expecting mothers. In the email he included a petition urging Congress and Senator Portman to support the legislation to ensure that “...pregnant workers and new mothers have the workplace protections and accommodations they deserve.”



**ROB PORTMAN**

Portman voted for an amendment to a non-binding budget resolution - meaning that the measure leaves current law unchanged - to support pregnant worker accommodations. However, Portman has not joined a bipartisan group of 30 senators as a cosponsor of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act introduced two months later. The budget amendment that Portman voted for would have the same impact as this piece of legislation, but it is unclear how he would vote on this binding legislation as he has not indicated support or opposition for the actual bill.

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## STUDY WAYS TO ELIMINATE BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S CAREER ADVANCEMENT



### TED STRICKLAND

While he has not put out any clear proposals during his campaign for Senate, he did seek ways to advance the status of women and girls during his time as governor in Ohio. He signed an executive order to create the Ohio Council on Women and Girls, which aimed to advance the status of women and girls in the state with a particular focus on economic development, education, and healthcare.



### ROB PORTMAN

Portman is a co-sponsor of the Workplace Advancement Act, which includes efforts to enhance opportunities for women in industries that women are typically underrepresented such as manufacturing, energy, and transportation.

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## PROMOTE WAYS TO ENSURE OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN TO ADVANCE AND EXCEL IN THE BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SECTOR



### TED STRICKLAND

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Strickland's position on the issue.



### ROB PORTMAN

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Portman's position on the issue.

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## PROTECT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN HOUSING AND THE WORKPLACE



### TED STRICKLAND

As governor, he signed an executive order establishing a workplace domestic violence policy for state agencies that provided staff training as well as services and flexibility to employees dealing with a domestic violence situation. The policy ensured that domestic violence survivors would not face discrimination in the workplace and that their identity would remain confidential.



### ROB PORTMAN

Portman did not co-sponsor or indicate support or opposition to several bills that provided protections from discrimination in the workplace to domestic violence and sexual violence survivors during his first term, such as the Security and Financial Empowerment (SAFE) Act of 2015 and the Fair Housing for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survivors Act of 2016. He did, however, vote in support of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which expanded housing protections of federal housing programs and includes victims of sexual assault under these protections, which prevent eviction or denial of public of Section 8 housing.

## PROTECT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE ON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR GENDER IDENTITY



### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has spoken during this campaign about the work that he did as governor to protect against discrimination in the workplace including the executive order that he signed preventing a person from being fired or denied a state job on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. On his campaign website, he states that “If we are to promote diversity, we must prohibit institutionalized discrimination. As governor, I signed an executive order prohibiting discrimination based on sexual identity or gender identity in state employment decisions.”



### ROB PORTMAN

Portman voted in support of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) which would prohibit discrimination against employees or job applicants on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Yet, he introduced a ‘religious liberty’ exemption amendment to the bill which exempts employers from retaliation for not adhering to the law on the basis of their religious beliefs.

## Improving Women’s Health and Well-Being

## PRESERVE ACCESS TO AND INCREASE AFFORDABILITY OF COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE FOR LOW-INCOME AND WORKING WOMEN



### TED STRICKLAND

Strickland has voiced his support for protecting the Affordable Care Act, which has extended healthcare coverage to millions of women across the country - specifically low-income women who are less likely to have healthcare coverage through their employers. He has also stated that he supports federal funding to Planned Parenthood clinics, which provide healthcare services for many working and low-income women.

Additionally, in his budget as governor he laid out a plan to extend healthcare coverage through Medicaid for more women, including pregnant women with incomes up to 200 percent of poverty. This proposal was later rejected by the legislature.



### ROB PORTMAN

Portman has voted multiple times for legislation that would repeal the Affordable Care Act, which would impact the health care coverage of many women across the country. Shortly after being elected to the Senate, he introduced legislation that would repeal the ACA. He has also voted many times for bills that would restrict federal funding from going to Planned Parenthood, which would block grants to services for STI testing, cancer screenings, contraception, and a host of other health care services.

## PROTECT AGAINST CULTURAL BARRIERS FOR OBTAINING HEALTHCARE SERVICES



### **TED STRICKLAND**

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Strickland's position on the issue



### **ROB PORTMAN**

There has been no mention of this issue specifically during his campaign for Senate. No evidence was found of Portman's position on the issue.

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## KEEP LAWMAKERS AND EMPLOYERS OUT OF HEALTHCARE DECISIONS



### **TED STRICKLAND**

On Strickland's campaign website under the issue of healthcare, he states that he believes "...a woman's healthcare choices are between a woman and her doctor, not between a woman and her boss. And I believe preventive services, including contraception, should be provided to women with no additional copay." He has voiced opposition for legislation that would impede women's access to reproductive healthcare.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman has voted multiple times to restrict federal funding from going to Planned Parenthood, limiting women's healthcare access and choices. He has voiced support for the Hobby Lobby Supreme Court ruling, which stated that for-profit corporations could deny coverage of birth control in health insurance plans under religious objections. He was a co-sponsor of the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act of 2011, which would have allowed health plans to decline to cover specific items and services if the organization or individual offering the plan held 'religious or moral objections' to the services. Additionally, Portman voted in support of the Blunt Amendment, which would have allowed any employer to refuse coverage of certain healthcare services such as abortion or contraception under 'moral objection' exemptions.

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## RESTORE ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTION, ABORTION, AND OTHER REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE SERVICES



### **TED STRICKLAND**

Strickland has voiced his support of repealing the Hyde Amendment, which has banned federal funds from being used for abortion, except in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of the mother is threatened. He has also stated that he opposes exemptions that allow employers to deny birth control and abortion coverage in health care plans due to religious or moral objections.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman has voted multiple times for bills that would restrict access to abortion and other reproductive healthcare services. Additionally, he has been a vocal opponent of the Affordable Care Act's birth control benefit, which ensures no copay for women accessing birth control through health insurance. He wrote a letter to the Department of Justice in an attempt to prevent this benefit from going into effect with the ACA.

Senator Portman has voted multiple times to restrict federal funding to Planned Parenthood, which would cut funds from programs that provide contraception, birth control, abortion, and a host of other reproductive healthcare services. His website states that he has voted 77-0 on bills that would restrict access to abortion.

During his time in the House he was an original cosponsor of the Partial Birth Abortion Ban, voted against a budget amendment that would have given states the ability to accept Medicaid funding to cover the costs of abortion for low-income women in cases of rape, incest, or when the life of the mother was in danger, and voted in favor of legislation that would have prohibited women in the military from accessing privately-funded abortions, even in cases of rape or incest, at military medical facilities overseas.

## **ENSURE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ARE MET WITHOUT COST TO THE SURVIVOR, AND THE CRIMES AGAINST THEM ARE INVESTIGATED**



### **TED STRICKLAND**

In an interview during his run for the Senate, he was asked about the ways in which he would address campus sexual assault. He voiced his concern about ensuring thorough investigation of the cases in a uniform way. He stated that, "It's essential to have programs in place for those that are the survivors of sexual assault to make sure that they are adequately and fully supported. They need to have no fear or concern about coming forth and telling their stories and exposing those that violate them in these ways."



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman voted in favor of legislation that would advance military sexual assault reforms. He also voted in support of the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act of 2016, which would protect victims of sexual assault by extending the statute of limitations to 10 years beyond the victim's 18th birthday. Portman was a co-sponsor of the Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2013 or the SAFER Act of 2013, which aims to help eliminate the backlog of untested DNA evidence rape kits from unsolved rape cases.

He has worked on several pieces of legislation that deal directly with protection of sexual trafficking victims and prosecution of traffickers. He authored five different federal anti-trafficking laws, including the Bringing Children Home Act and the Combat Human Trafficking Act, as well as an amendment to the Violence Against Women Act that allows for child victims of sex trafficking to be eligible for grant assistance.

## **SUPPORT COMMUNITY PROGRAMS THAT PREVENT SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUCH AS HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION**



### **TED STRICKLAND**

Strickland has voiced support for maintaining federal funding to Planned Parenthood, which would continue to fund the organization's programs that address healthy relationship education and youth domestic violence education.

Additionally, as governor, Strickland signed a bill aimed at involving Ohio schools in helping to stop dating violence. The bill required local school boards to adopt policies to prevent and address abusive student relationships, train staff on the subject, and add lessons in dating violence prevention to health classes for 7th through 12th grade. He also eliminated federally subsidized abstinence-only programs from the Ohio budget when he was governor to ensure access to comprehensive sex education in classrooms.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Portman was a co-sponsor of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, which provides funding for programs to help schools, youth organizations, and domestic violence agencies address teen and young adult dating violence and sexual assault. However, Portman has voted multiple times to restrict federal funding from Planned Parenthood, which would negatively impact funding for their programs to promote healthy relationships and youth domestic violence education.

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## **PROTECT SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND STALKING SURVIVORS**



### **TED STRICKLAND**

During his campaign for Senate he has voiced his support for legislation aimed at protecting domestic violence and stalking victims by closing loopholes and making it more difficult for abusers and stalkers to access firearms. He has also spoken about the steps that universities should be taking to address sexual assault on campuses.

As Governor he signed an executive order to implement the Barbara Warner Workplace Violence Policy, establishing a workplace domestic violence policy for state agencies, providing staff training as well as services and flexibility to employees dealing with a domestic violence situation.



### **ROB PORTMAN**

Senator Portman founded the Senate Caucus to End Human Trafficking in 2013, and currently serves as co-chair of the group. He is the author of five federal anti-trafficking bills, all of which have been signed into law. Additionally, he was a co-Sponsor of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act in 2013 and worked with Senator Blumenthal to introduce an amendment to the bill protecting child victims of human trafficking. This legislation provides expansions to protections and funding for programs that address domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

However, Portman has voted against legislation that would close loopholes to prevent domestic violence abusers from accessing firearms and has declined to sign on to a bipartisan measure to protect victims of domestic violence and stalking by reducing abusers' and stalkers' access to firearms.

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