

Ohio GOP Rep. Balderson says Trump's executive orders 'getting out of control'

By **Samantha Hendrickson**
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Republican U.S. Rep. Troy Balderson described President Donald Trump's flurry of executive orders as "getting out of control" at a Westerville Area Chamber business luncheon Thursday, saying that only Congress can do certain things.

Balderson, whose district includes the central and southeastern Ohio counties like Licking, Fairfield and parts of Delaware County, expressed some pushback to the idea of sole decision-making power lying with Trump and billionaire advisor Elon Musk.

"Congress has to decide whether or not the Department of Education goes away," Balderson asserted. "Not the president, not Elon Musk. Congress decides."

While the Zanesville native said he respects Trump and the need for executive orders, and that the executive branch has every right to look into government agencies like those dealing with education and Medicaid, "Congress has to do their work."

Electric vehicles aren't bad, but have their place

Speaking before central Ohio business leaders, the former businessman touched on economic topics like inflation, solar energy and the importance of supporting small businesses.

He especially homed in on tax credits for electric vehicles and speculated that the federal \$7,500 tax credit could be pulled back. He was careful to clarify that he doesn't believe electric vehicles are bad, but the impact of these vehicles is different depending on what community you're in, especially in the rural and urban divide.

"If someone wants to put them in, let them put them in [urban areas]. But when they put a charging station in Morgan County, Ohio that doesn't even have a four lane road, the constituents that I represent down there get really upset because they don't have water, sewer, broadband, and they have one

educational system down there," Balderson explained. "So what's going to be impactful for them?"

Getting creative and possible cuts

As more and more agencies see cuts at the federal level, questions of Social Security, affordable health care and Medicaid loomed large.

When asked about ensuring affordable health care for Ohioans in a system that many struggle to afford care in, Balderson pointed to more "out of the box" solutions that are becoming more widely used, like mobile health units, federally qualified health centers and remote care to try to increase access, especially for rural populations.

Balderson, who serves on a congressional subcommittee for health, also assured the audience that elimination of Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid are not on the horizon, but changes to Medicare and Medicaid aren't out of the question and Republicans in Washington haven't ruled out cuts.

In Ohio, state representatives are considering a measure in the budget that would repeal Medicaid expansion funding if the federal medical assistance is below 90%. If federal cuts are made, roughly 770,000 Ohioans, including children, could lose coverage.

"I don't want the whole fear thing to start," Balderson said. "We've got to look at what we can do to make sure we provide the necessary care. No one wants to take an unprivileged child off of health care. Nobody. We want to make sure that they stay on... but how do they stay on and it be fiscally responsible for them to stay on?"