

# Ohio Senate Republican pitches tax perks for gym memberships, personal training

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – An Ohio Senator wants to lift weights and lower taxes.

State Sen. Al Cutrona, a Mahoning County Republican, proposed [legislation](#) Tuesday to the Ohio Senate Ways and Means Committee that would allow Ohioans to deduct up to \$1,500 per year from their reportable income for dollars spent on gym membership and personal training.

That includes fees – initiation, renewal, monthly, and others – for facilities including athletic clubs, health spas, or gyms.

Tax deductions allow filers to reduce their reportable income by a given amount. Cutrona said he’s also interested in changing the bill to include a \$100 nonrefundable tax credit, a dollar-for-dollar reduction in a total tax bill.

In Ohio, about 36% of people were considered obese in 2023, based on their self-reported weight and height, [according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). That’s the 11th highest by state.

Cutrona said his legislation could act as a nudge for Ohioans towards healthier and more active lifestyles. Plus, he referred to the legislation as an investment going toward cost savings associated with better physical health.

Nationally, about 24% of Americans aged 6 and older – 73 million people – have a gym membership, [according to the Health & Fitness Association](#).

State analysts have not yet drawn up any cost estimate on the legislation, and Cutrona didn’t offer any guess.

State Sen. Bill DeMora, a Columbus Democrat, said he’s supportive of the big picture idea but raised his eyebrows at some of the numbers. He said several recreation centers in his district cost about \$20 a month, and gyms run up to \$50 a month. He asked whether the bill might incentivize gyms to raise rates.

For that matter, said state Sen. Beth Liston, a Franklin County Democrat, most people use the standardized deduction. She asked whether Cutrona had any data on how many Ohioans claim the standard deduction in lieu of itemizing their taxes. He did not.

To take advantage of the deduction, a taxpayer would have to itemize their taxes.

The legislation is in its early stages. It would require several hearings, as scheduled by the committee chairman, before any vote.