

THOMAS COLLINS

GARRETTSVILLE, OH

What do you see as the most pressing economic issue in your community?

Being between the Warren Youngstown and the Akron Canton areas, I feel we have been ignored for far too long. We also are caught up in the job loses of the larger areas, yet no one hears when we say the roads are bad, the water is polluted, or public transportation does not exist. we too have infrastructure that needs attention! And we get scraps while Columbus gets SMART city awards of millions. Like most Ohioans, we need higher pay, cleaner air and water, we need a state and national government to place us ahead of corporations who come and go at a tax break, or cheaper labor market.

What does a “vibrant community” look like to you?

A vibrant Community is one where we are all connected, and the solutions include everyone, no matter the size of their neighborhood. My area once sent a President to Washington because we were connected, because light rail and newspapers meant what was said in a Garrettsville play house was heard in Cleveland, and through that the whole nation.

How has Ohio’s current economic state affected your life?

First off, it meant that a drug death was dumped in the park behind me, and drugs effect our youth all around. Killing some, creating thieves, making others grow up ahead of time as they step up to replace family with drug issues.

Anything else you'd like to share?

The lack of standards by all in Washington reaches all the way down as we try to teach and preach values, while ignoring the reality everyone can see each day. We even preach higher education, yet we all know it is often a financial trap with no escape because we let corporations run the educational dollars. We can do so much better than this.