Beatty, who stepped down from her job at The Ohio State University as the Vice-President of Outreach and Engagement, had the strong backing of Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman in the race.

By IKE MGBATOGU
Contributing Writer

COLUMBUS – State Representative Sandra Williams, the President of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus (OLBC), who represents Ohio's 11th House District in the Cleveland area, must be feeling abundantly pleased.

Why?

Because her plan of doing something concerning the paucity of Black representation in Congress was realized after the election, creating the opportunity of boosting the voice of minorities in Ohio when it comes to running the affairs of the nation.

During last year's redistricting brouhaha, her argument for why she initially offered a tepid support for the controversial Republican plan was simple: "there's something in it for us."

That 'something' was her goal of securing an additional seat in the U.S. House of Representatives for African-Americans in Ohio.

"Now in the current redistricting plan, there's a real opportunity to have another minority member of the Ohio Congressional delegation," said Williams, referring to the prospect of a minority candidate winning the new 3rd Congressional district being created in Columbus.

Her words: "It is a shame that Ohio has one Black congressional representative." That one Black representative is Congresswoman Marcia Fudge who represents Cleveland's 11th district.

But with the recent election of Joyce Beatty to represent the new 3rd Congressional district, Fudge now has company. She will no longer be the lone African-American member of Congress from Ohio.

Beatty, 62, is heading to Washington after unleashing a shellacking against her Republican opponent Chris Long, 54, a member of the Reynoldsburg City Council. She corralled 72 percent of the vote, according to the unofficial result of the race.

Beatty spoke after her victory, vowing to be a "bridge" builder between the constituents and their representatives.

"I'm going to Washington not for me, but all the folks in Ohio," she said.

Outside of Cleveland's 11th Congressional district, the new 3rd district boasts the largest Black community out of the 16 redistricted districts that emerged from redistricting row. It was immediately widely perceived as a historic opportunity to elect another Black member of congress given that it was drawn to lean heavily Democratic.

Seemingly, it is fitting considering that African-Americans make up about 12 percent of Ohio's population, according to the U.S. Census.

Beatty, who was a former member of the Ohio House of Representatives, fought off former Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy, Ohio House of Representatives member Ted Celeste and Columbus Councilmember Priscilla Tyson in a bruising Democratic primary contest for the right to take on the hopelessly underdog Long.

Beatty's 3rd district is entirely in Franklin County, and covers most of Columbus, Bexley, Gahanna, Reynoldsburg and Whitehall.

Beatty, who stepped down from her job at The Ohio State University as the Vice-President of Outreach and Engagement, had the strong backing of Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman in the race.

Mgbatogu is a freelance writer and editor of Onumba.com based in Columbus. He can be reached by email at: Onumbamedia@yahoo.com