

**Note:** *“It’s going to make the people of Lima really proud of their town. People are going to learn something about a part of Ohio that many people don’t know about. What makes me feel good is when people who live in towns like this feel good, and are proud of what they’ve accomplished. That’s what makes it worthwhile to me,” Kasich said.*



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## **Kasich: Lima natural choice for speech**

By Heather Rutz

LIMA — The governor likes us. He really, really likes us.

Gov. John Kasich saying he wanted to deliver the State of the State in Lima was shocking news for Limalanders. We are not used to people knowing the good things happening here, but we are used to not being invited to the ball.

But, Kasich said for him, it was a natural choice.

“It just made sense. I like Lima. I’ve been there many times. There’s good things happening there. It just felt right. Sometimes things just feel a certain way. From what I can tell, it appears as though the people are embracing the Legislature and the administration and the cabinet. It’s great,” Kasich said Thursday during an interview at his office in Columbus.

This is the second year Kasich, a Republican, has asked to move the State of the State, which is delivered to a joint session of the Legislature, out of the capital. A year ago, he went to Wells Academy, the top-performing public school in the state, in Steubenville. It was the first time the State of the State was moved from the Statehouse, and it was only the second joint legislative session outside the statehouse. The first was to celebrate the state’s Bicentennial in Chillicothe, Ohio’s original capital city.

Last year, the Supreme Court could not attend the speech because of conflicts with the court’s schedule. Many others, Democrats and Republicans alike, opposed the idea because of the extra travel time and added costs.

Kasich said he likes the idea of moving government closer to taxpayers and voters, and likes putting a spotlight on communities other than Columbus. His office coordinated a lottery for tickets available to the public. He brushes aside the criticism he has already heard and knows he’ll hear more.

“This idea of taking the State of the State to where people are, to me is like, it’s such a great thing. Some people have trouble with it, which is to me bizarre. That’s something I don’t really understand,” Kasich said. “There are still people who object to the notion. Maybe there’s no changing them. Sometimes people have hard hearts and they just don’t want to get it. We’ll see.”

The announcement came as a pleasant surprise to Mayor David Berger, he said, and the community is eager to show the rest of the state the way the local economy has pulled through the recession, and the quality of life in Lima.

“We are seeing a major upturn for all our manufacturers. That’s genuinely a good opportunity for us to share that with the state,” Berger said. “This truly is an unprecedented circumstance. We’ve been told we could have as many as 1,300 people here. I think it’s reasonable to believe that a very small fraction of those have

ever been here before. This is a terrific opportunity for us to have them here, have them understand what cultural, educational and career opportunities are here. Long-term it may help guide some state policy or practice.”

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